LORD NORTHBROOK'S INDIAN ADMINISTRATION
1872-1876

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the
University of London
by

EDWARD CALVIN MOULTON

School of Oriental and African Studies

July 1964

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

Abstract

This thesis is a study of Lord Northbrook's career as Governor-General of India from 1872 to 1876. Northbrook was not a pre-eminently brilliant ruler nor a radical reformer, but he was a competent administrator whose sagacity and judgement were rarely at fault and who made notable contributions in many branches of government. He firmly believed that India should be ruled according to the liberal principles of the Proclamation of 1858, paid close attention to Indian public opinion, and, by shaping much of his policy accordingly, endeavoured, with considerable success, to strengthen the British position in the country. The first chapter gives a brief account of Northbrook's previous career, discusses the circumstances of his appointment, and examines the scene in India which was one of considerable unrest and had a profound effect on his whole administration. The six subsequent chapters study the problems which Northbrook considered most important and the ones which engaged most of his attention -- finance, education and the admission of Indians to the civil service, famine, relations with the princely state of Baroda, tariff reform, and foreign affairs. In the last two of these chapters considerable attention is given to relations with the home Government which became seriously strained after the Conservatives, with whose

Indian policy Northbrook strongly disagreed, came into power in 1874. The conflict between him and Lord Salisbury, the Secretary of State, is specially examined in the final chapter which discusses the reasons for Northbrook's premature retirement and suggests that it was largely influenced by the opposition of the home Government to policies which he considered essential for the well-being of India. The principal sources on which this work is based are the Northbrook papers, the papers of other contemporary statesmen, the official records of the period, and contemporary newspapers.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

My thanks are due, in the first place, to the Rothermere Fellowships Trust for granting me a fellowship in 1960 and for renewing it for three subsequent years. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Dr. K.A. Ballhatchet who supervised my work through all its stages, showed constant interest, and supplied innumerable suggestions for improvement. I am grateful to the present Lord Northbrook for granting me the use of papers in the possession of the family. I also wish to acknowledge my debt to the staffs of the libraries in which I have worked and particularly to Mr. S.C. Sutton and his team at the India Office Library. A word of thanks is also due to Christ Church Library, Oxford, and to Cambridge University Library for allowing me to use private papers in their possession. Finally, I owe a very great debt to my wife who typed most of the manuscript, assisted with proof-reading and gave invaluable help throughout.

Abbreviations

Agric.	Agriculture
B.I.A.	British Indian Association
Co.	Council
Com.	Commerce
Ed.	Education
Enc.	Enclosure(s)
Fin.	Financial
For.	Foreign
Leg.	Legislative
N.	Northbrook
P.	Papers
Pol.	Political
P.P.	Parliamentary Papers
Proc.	Proceedings
Rev.	Revenue
Sec.	Secret
Sep.	Separate
S.S.	Secretary of State (for India)

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of one of the most interesting and important Viceroys of the second half of the nineteenth century. Lord Northbrook was a man of unusually strong personality and an extremely capable administrator who effectively shaped the course of policy during his years in India. It is true that he left few outstanding administrative reforms to his credit, but much unostentatious progress was made in many branches of government. He assumed office at a time of considerable unrest and devoted his efforts to assuaging it by ruling to a large extent according to the views of the politically conscious section of the community. As a moderate Liberal he sympathized with many of the aspirations of the leading Indians of his generation and strongly opposed the imperialist policies initiated by the Conservative Government following its assumption of power in 1874. He became widely regarded by the Indian moderates of his time as one of that "very small minority" of British statesmen who were "real friends of India".[1]

Apart from an official biography by Bernard Mallet,[2] which devotes less than one hundred pages to his years in India, practically no writing has been done on Northbrook.

---

[1] Editorial, Hindoo Patriot, 19 Nov. 1904.

[2] Thomas George, Earl of Northbrook, A Memoir. London, 1908.

Mallet barely touches upon the main issues of his administration and his attitude is uncritical. Other writers who have made passing reference to Northbrook have generally either repeated Mallet's views or, influenced by the opinions of contemporary civil servants many of whom had little sympathy for Northbrook's policies, dismissed him as unimportant. In fact, the latter view has tended to become most widely accepted. The Oxford History of India, for example, states that Northbrook's "regime was essentially a less inspired continuation" of Lord Mayo's.[1]

In this thesis I have endeavoured, by using original sources, to add to our knowledge and understanding of Northbrook's Indian administration. To trace all the actions of such a zealous administrator as Northbrook would be tedious and fruitless. In this work attention has been given primarily to the formulation of policy and to the principles which guided his behaviour. This has been done by studying the problems which Northbrook considered most important -- finance, education and the admission of Indians to the civil service, famine, relations with the princely state of Baroda, tariff reform, and foreign affairs. Few of these problems were unique to Northbrook's Governor-Generalship and in order to show his contribution an effort has been made to set them in their general context. Considerable attention has been given to relations with the home

---

[1] 3rd edition, p. 687.

Government particularly after the Conservatives came into power when, because of opposition from Lord Salisbury, it became increasingly difficult for Northbrook to pursue the policies which he considered necessary for the well-being of India. This conflict has been specially examined in a chapter inquiring into the reasons for Northbrook's premature retirement and the suggestion has been made that he and Salisbury, partly because of their differing political allegiances, disagreed fundamentally in their outlook upon Indian affairs rather than merely upon isolated issues. It has also been suggested that these differences were a major influence in Northbrook's resignation. In an attempt to form a balanced assessment of Northbrook's impact and contribution, I have tried to avoid simply reflecting the British view and have endeavoured to give the Indian reaction to his policies as far as these were expressed in the press or in representations to the Government.

The principal source of material for this work has been the Northbrook Papers[1] -- a source used by Mallet but not previously examined as a whole by any historian. Other private collections which were consulted and which proved useful, though in varying degrees, were those of the Duke of Argyll, the Marquis of Salisbury, Gladstone, Disraeli, Sir Richard Temple, Lord Cromer, Lord Mayo, and

---

[1] See Bibliography for a description of these papers.

the Earl of Lytton. Since the Northbrook Papers contain only private or demi-official material, very extensive use has been made of the official records. Another invaluable source of information has been contemporary newspapers, Indian, Anglo-Indian, and British.

Chapter I

THE MAN AND THE SCENE

Few viceroys appointed to India had more extensive experience of public administration or greater intimacy with Parliamentary politics than Northbrook. Nor were there many who were more familiar with Indian affairs. Northbrook,[1] as his biographer stated, "was nurtured in the air of Whig politics and high office."[2] His apprenticeship for public life began in 1846, when, having obtained a second class degree in classics from Oxford, he became private secretary to his uncle, Henry Labouchere, with whom he served both in Ireland and at the Board of Trade. In 1853 he became secretary to Sir Charles Wood, Chairman of the Board of Control, and during his two years in that position gained his first real acquaintance with Indian affairs. A few years later he resumed his connection with India though in a more important capacity. He had been elected to the Commons as Liberal M.P. for

---

[1]He assumed this title in 1866 upon the death of his father, who had been created a peer a few months before.

[2]Mallet, Northbrook, p. 16. His father, Sir Francis Baring, a member of the famous banking family of that name, had a distinguished public career. He was a Whig M.P. for thirty-nine years, served as Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1839 to 1841, and was First Lord of the Admiralty between 1849 and 1852. Northbrook's mother was a niece of Earl Grey, the Prime Minister who introduced the Reform Bill, and a sister of Sir George Grey, a prominent Whig statesman who held cabinet posts in a number of administrations.

Penryn and Falmouth in 1857 and when Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister in 1859 Northbrook was appointed Under-Secretary of State to the newly established India Office under Sir Charles Wood. Except for a few months at the War Office in 1861, he remained in this position until 1864 and thus shared in the extensive reorganization of Indian administration carried out after the Mutiny. Between 1864 and 1866 Northbrook served in a similar capacity at the Home Office which was then under his uncle, Sir George Grey. When the Liberals returned to office under Gladstone in 1868, Northbrook, who had now become a peer, was appointed Under-Secretary at the War Office. In this capacity he took a leading share with the Minister of War, Edward Cardwell, in the reform and reorganization of the army.[1] He demonstrated abilities of the highest order both in the work of formulating the reforms and in defending them in the House of Lords. This, combined with the administrative capacity which he had shown in his previous appointments, marked him out for future advancement.

When the Governor-Generalship became unexpectedly vacant by Lord Mayo's assassination in February 1872, Northbrook was one of the first persons to be considered for the post. Viscount Halifax, the former Sir Charles Wood, a member of Gladstone's Cabinet, strongly favoured

---

[1]Mallet, Northbrook, pp. 48-52.

the appointment of Northbrook and urged it upon the Prime Minister.[1] Earl Granville, the Foreign Secretary, considered him "a safe strong man, with indefatigable power of work."[2] However, the Duke of Argyll, Secretary of State for India, was convinced that the position should go to Lord Dufferin, an Irish peer whose career had been largely in the diplomatic service. Argyll admitted that Northbrook had "substantial qualifications" and that the Government would be "pretty safe with him", but considered him unsuitable because he was "somewhat deficient in the popular elements of character which go so very far in such a post as that of Viceroy."[3] "He has," Argyll maintained, "a somewhat ungenial manner, amounting almost to dryness & hardness in the impression it conveys." Gladstone, however, had a personal preference for Northbrook, perhaps because he had been a stronger supporter of his Government's general reform programme than Dufferin, who had shown some reservations over the Irish Land Bill of 1870. Gladstone was also convinced, despite Northbrook's lack of geniality,[4] that he had the best qualifications for the Governor-

---

[1] Halifax to Gladstone, 13 Feb. 1872, Gladstone P., Add. MSS. 44185.

[2] Granville to Gladstone, 13 Feb. 1872, ibid., 44168.

[3] Argyll to Gladstone, 14 and 19 Feb. 1872, ibid., 44102.

[4] Northbrook was by temperament very reserved, but his 'ungenial manner' was perhaps largely a result of the personal tragedy he had recently suffered. In 1867, when Northbrook was only forty-one, his wife died, and three years later one of his two sons was drowned at sea.

Generalship and decided to offer him the position.

Northbrook considered that the Indian Viceroyalty was the greatest position to which any British subject could aspire, but he showed little enthusiasm for the office when the possibility of succeeding Mayo was first broached to him by Halifax.[1] With characteristic humility, he was far from confident about his qualifications and very conscious of the great responsibility which the position entailed. However, his reservations were primarily on account of his children, Emma and Francis, aged eighteen and twenty-one respectively. A devoted father, Northbrook was not prepared to face a long separation from them, and it was only after doctors advised that there was no reason why they could not go to India when the cold weather began that he decided he "ought not to refuse"[2] the Viceroyalty. He was offered the position on 20 February and accepted it the following day.

Northbrook's appointment to the Governor-Generalship came at a time when there was great unrest in the country, and this was to have a profound effect upon his general policies. The Viceroy had just been assassinated in the Andaman Islands by a Muslim convict from Peshawar. Only a few months earlier, the acting Chief Justice, Mr. J.P. Norman, had been murdered by a Muslim fanatic on the steps

---

[1] Mallet, Northbrook, p. 53.
[2] Quoted in ibid.

of the High Court in Calcutta. Both Mayo and Norman had been associated with the recent efforts to suppress the Wahabis, a Muslim puritanical and reformist sect which had lately come into increasing prominence, partly as a result of the rapid westernization of India and partly because of the over-zealous persecution by the Government.[1] Norman's assassin was undoubtedly connected with the Wahabis,[2] and at the time there were serious apprehensions that they were also responsible for Mayo's death. These assassinations, coming at a time when rumours of an uprising had been rife throughout much of northern India where

---

[1]Wahabi origins in India date from the 1820's and, although they were centred mainly in the frontier state of Sitana, they had supporters and adherents within British territory from whom they received considerable financial assistance especially after the Mutiny. It was largely because of this support that a British expedition against the colony in 1863 ended in failure. After that the Government shifted its attention to the activities of the Wahabis within India. In 1868 J.H. Reily, head of the detective department of the Bengal police, received information that a jihad was being preached against the British in various parts of the province. At the same time there were indications of increased Wahabi activity in other parts of India. As a result the Government arrested many suspected Wahabi leaders and supporters. Some of these were later released without trial, but between 1869 and 1871 official prosecutions were brought against many of those arrested. Norman had rejected an application for a writ of habeas corpus made on behalf of one of the leading prisoners, Amir Khan, and he was about to hear an appeal against the conviction of him and six others when he was assassinated.

[2]Memo. on Norman's assassination, Bayley, undated, Argyll P., vol. 9.

memories of the Mutiny were still distressingly vivid,[1] aroused intense alarm among the European community in the country. In India and Britain many officials undoubtedly feared that the two murders were part of a greater Wahabi plot or that they were the prelude to a conspiracy on the part of the general Muslim population which was far from reconciled to British rule.

There was great anxiety, too, over recent violent outbreaks by the Kukas, a Sikh reformist sect. Founded in the Punjab in the 1840's, the sect made few converts until the 1860's when they came under the energetic leadership of Ram Singh and developed tenuous political aspirations. Kuka hostility was directed mainly against Punjabi Muslims and during 1870 and 1871 members of the sect carried out a number of murderous attacks upon Muslim butchers.[2] The Punjab Government regarded the sect, which was officially estimated to have some three hundred thousand members, as a dangerous menace and, partly because of this, those who were found guilty of the crimes received "swift and terrible" punishment.[3] But the Government's hope that

---

[1]Memo. on panic of Europeans at Allahabad and Roorkee, Mayo, 18 Sept. 1870, Mayo P., vol. 2; and G.R.G. Hambly, "Unrest in northern India during the Viceroyalty of Lord Mayo ...", Royal Central Asian Journal, Jan. 1961, pp. 45-49.

[2]Resolution, Punjab Govt., 16 Sept. 1871, Argyll P., vol. 2.

[3]Ibid.; and Foreign Dept. report on feeling in the Punjab, Oct. 1871, Mayo P., vol. 29.

this punishment would deter the sect from further violence was not realized. In January 1872 a band of about two hundred Kukas, perhaps with the aim of getting either money or arms, attacked Malaudh, a village in the district of Ludhiana, and Naler Kotla, the chief town in a small Muslim state.[1] Both attacks were beaten off and the following day troops from surrounding princely states captured about seventy of the offenders. These were handed over to the British Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, L. Cowan, who, on his own initiative and without trial, immediately had forty-nine of the prisoners blown from guns. Douglas Forsyth, the Commissioner, arrived on the scene the next day and, after a summary trial, hanged the remaining prisoners. This punishment, which in its savagery exceeded almost anything done during the Mutiny, was condoned by the Punjab Government and applauded by many Englishmen in India -- reactions which indicated the extent of alarm which existed over the prospect of a Kuka uprising or a more general outbreak.

It was against this background of unrest and uneasiness that Gladstone, who was particularly anxious to avoid "a sudden violent, or discreditable severance"[2] between India and Britain, had selected Northbrook for the Viceroyalty. Public opinion in England, to the extent that it was

---

[1]Mayo to Argyll, 24 Jan. 1872, Argyll P., vol. 2.
[2]Gladstone to N., 15 Oct. 1872, N.P., vol. 20.

interested in India, largely agreed that Gladstone had chosen a man who was well suited to deal with the difficult situation in the country. It was true that some newspapers feared that since Northbrook had held only subordinate offices he might be ill-suited for the heavy responsibility of the Viceroyalty and were critical of the appointment.[1] But the most influential sections of the press supported Gladstone's choice. The Daily News, London's leading Liberal newspaper, and the Spectator were confident that Northbrook was qualified to deal with the ordinary problems of government as well as the difficult situation prevailing in the country. The Times had especially strong praise for Northbrook's appointment.

> To rule India at any time must be an object of the loftiest ambition; to rule it now, when it is agitated ... by the revival of fanaticism among Mahomedan and Brahminical sects and by rapid assimilation of the ideas of the West which has provoked these revivals, requires a rare union of energy and patience, of sagacity and administrative vigour. ... Mr. Gladstone has been fortunate in securing the services of a member of his Government whose past career gives promise that he will be found superior to every exigency. ... He has devoted himself with an assiduity rare in any man, and most rare in those whose ample fortunes wile them away from labour, to the service of the State. ... No man ... has given greater satisfaction in the discharge of his functions, in all the offices he has ... filled. He will go out to India amid unanimous good wishes, and leaving a wide-spread belief that the right man has been found for the right place.[2]

The press in India was too preoccupied with recent events

---

[1]Editorials, Morning Advertiser and Standard, 22 Feb. 1872.

[2]Editorial, 21 Feb. 1872.

there to pay much attention to the choice of the new Viceroy and the prevalent attitude towards Northbrook was one of 'wait and see'.

Northbrook had much the same attitude towards the problems confronting him in India. In his farewell addresses in England he declined to comment upon the specific measures which he might pursue since these would depend to a very large extent upon the situation in the country. He made it clear, however, that his general policies would be conducted along liberal lines. In the first place he promised to govern according to "the first principles of our Indian administration" as laid down in the Proclamation of 1858[1] -- a document which the politically conscious section of the Indian community regarded as a sort of Magna Charta. Northbrook promised, too, that his policies would be essentially empirical, attuned as far as possible to Indian feelings and conditions. He forcefully expressed this view in a speech at his home town of Winchester.

> During those years [at the India Office] I learnt ... one great lesson which I shall carry with me to India -- that is, the difference between ... Eastern and Western civilisation, and the danger of being carried away by the ideas of what may be right and politic and wise in this country, when we come to deal with a different country -- a people with different sentiments, different religions, different education, and a different tone of thought from ourselves.[2]

---

[1]Speech at Winchester, 9 Mar. 1872, printed in G.B. Mullick, Lord Northbrook and his Mission in India, appendix.

[2]Ibid.

Northbrook expressed little anxiety over recent disturbing events in India though this matter was undoubtedly uppermost in his mind.

It was to this subject that Northbrook first directed his attention following his arrival in Bombay at the end of April. By that time the atmosphere in the country was less tense than it had been immediately following Mayo's death. Nearly three months had passed since that event and no other high dignitary had been struck down. Moreover, the official investigation into the "antecedants and connections" of Mayo's assassin had failed to establish any link between him and the Wahabis and had concluded that the crime was a personal act of vengance.[1] Europeans who had feared that the assassination was part of a general Wahabi plot breathed more easily. Nor had there been any further trouble from the Kukas. In fact, members of the Indian Government, in contrast to the Punjab authorities, had all along regarded the prospect of a general Kuka uprising with considerable scepticism. Lord Mayo, who had heard of the Kuka outbreak just before his death, believed that the barbarity of the local British officials was

---

[1]Napier to Argyll, 12 Apr. 1872, Argyll P., vol. 6. This conclusion did not meet with unanimous agreement. For example, Mayo's private secretary, O.T. Burne, always believed that the assassin was inspired by the Wahabis. [Burne, Memories, p. 134]. Indeed this may well have been true for there were members of the sect on the Andaman Islands.

altogether unjustified.[1] Lord Napier and Ettrick, the retiring Governor of Madras, who assumed the Governor-Generalship until Northbrook's arrival in India, shared Mayo's view. Under his brief rule the Indian Government dismissed Cowan from the civil service.[2] Forsyth was retained in the service but removed from the Commissioner-ship and forbidden ever again to exercise power of life and death. This action, though strongly disapproved of by the Punjab Government and much of the European community, undoubtedly had a salutary effect on the Indian educated classes who had naturally been appalled by the severity of the punishment meted out to the Kukas.

Northbrook's own investigations during his first weeks in India confirmed that there was no immediate cause for alarm. At Bombay, Allahabad, and Calcutta he made extensive inquiries about the "possibility of a Mahomedan rising", but found "no evidence of anything approaching a Mahomedan or Wahabee conspiracy."[3] He doubted whether the latter were "really a political sect" and was not unduly concerned over the preaching of the jihad or the reinforcement of the Sitana colony, considering these to be "perhaps the least injurious form that the enthusiasm of the Mahomedans

---

[1]Mayo to Argyll, 24 Jan. 1872, Argyll P., vol. 2.
[2]Napier to Argyll, 8 Mar. 1872, ibid., vol. 6.
[3]N. to Argyll, 10 May 1872, and N. to Northcote, 10 June 1872, N.P., vols. 9 and 20 respectively.

can take in India."[1] He believed, however, that the Wahabis might be a potential source of trouble to the Government. Consequently, he instructed the provincial administrators to maintain a careful watch over them and to keep him personally informed of their activities. A similar policy was followed towards the Kukas, over whom the Punjab authorities had been keeping a strict surveillance for some months before Northbrook's arrival in India. Although there were no indications that they were contemplating further outbreaks, Northbrook feared that "anxiety about a Kooka rising" would revive if Ram Singh and other leaders of the movement who had been arrested in 1871 were put on trial.[2] Northbrook and his Executive Council maintained that these leaders of the sect were responsible for the recent outbreaks in the Punjab and deported them, without trial, to Rangoon. This was certainly an autocratic exercise of authority though in the context of recent events in the Punjab it was perhaps politically expedient. At any rate the movement became less active following the deportations and the next year the Punjab authorities relaxed their tight surveillance over the sect.[3] However, there were indications that the Kukas, as well as the Wahabis, were still far from dormant and police continued

---

[1]N. to Northcote, ibid.; and N. to Argyll, 29 Apr. 1872, ibid., vol. 9.
[2]N. to Argyll, 17 June and 3 Oct. 1872; ibid.
[3]Davies to N., 7 Nov. 1873, ibid., vol. 14.

to maintain a policy of watchfulness over them. In fact, both sects were an underlying source of concern to Northbrook throughout most of his administration.

Although Northbrook was not apprehensive of a general uprising, he found that there was strong and widespread discontent in the country arising primarily from the overwhelming administrative pressure of recent years. In India, at least, the Conservative Mayo had been a firm supporter of change and improvement while his leading Councillors, Sir John Strachey, in charge of the Home Department, Sir Richard Temple, Finance Member, and Sir James Stephen, Legal Member, were even more zealous promoters of administrative reform and the rapid material development of India. Consequently, the period was characterized by unprecedented activity in almost every department of government. "Change, change, change," as one Indian newspaper later wrote, "was the order of the day."[1] There was considerable reorganization of the administrative system, an ambitious programme of public works (much of it based on insufficient planning) was vigorously pursued, efforts were made to extend elementary education, the work of consolidating existing laws was energetically continued, much new legislation was enacted, many traditional taxes were increased, an income-tax was levied throughout the

---

[1]Editorial, Hindoo Patriot, 13 Mar. 1876.

country, and local cesses or other forms of direct taxation were imposed in every province of British India. Such vigorous administration over a wide field was bound to have an unsettling effect on a country as conservative as nineteenth century India. Moreover, many of the specific measures adopted by the Government were strongly opposed by the politically conscious section of the community, though their sentiments were largely disregarded because Strachey -- who dominated official policy to a great extent -- and other leading Councillors had little respect for Indian public opinion. The result was that by 1872 there was intense dissatisfaction with Government policy throughout much of India. Indeed, the outbreaks of violence were perhaps an extreme expression of this discontent.

During his first few months in office Northbrook received much evidence of this discontent. The British Indian Association, the organization of Bengali zamindars and the professional élite, in its address of welcome maintained that the country was suffering from "over-legislation, from over-taxation, [and] from over ... ambitious administrative improvements."[1] The People's Association of Dacca, claiming to be "the only corporate body in Eastern Bengal, representing Native opinion," declared that "the imposition of numerous taxes, quite

---

[1]Address to N., 13 May 1872, printed in Mullick, Lord Northbrook and his Mission in India, appendix.

unsuited to the ... circumstances of the people, ... and the enactments of several uncalled-for Acts interfering with the civil, social, and religious customs and usages of the country, have ... created a feeling of deep alarm, anxiety, and distrust, in the minds of the people."[1] Sir Dinkar Rao,[2] a prominent Indian statesman who met Northbrook during his brief stay in Bombay, forcefully voiced much the same opinions.[3] There were indications, too, that the discontent was not confined to the zamindars and professional and educated classes but that it was shared to a large extent by the ryots.[4] Nor did the evidence of discontent come only from Indians. In fact, one of the most urgent representations about the serious ill-feeling in the country came from A.O. Hume, Secretary to the Department of Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce. Hume, who was on far more intimate terms with Indians than most officials, warned Northbrook that dissatisfaction with British rule was becoming increasingly intense. He maintained "that whereas [during the Mutiny] ... we had the active support of some and the passive countenance of a

---

[1]Address to N., 15 May 1872, quoted in ibid.

[2]Dinkar Rao (1819-96). Maratha Brahman; Chief Minister of Gwalior, 1851-59; rewarded by British for his loyalty during Mutiny; member of Indian Legislative Council in early 1860's; served on Baroda tribunal in 1875.

[3]N. to Argyll, 10 May 1872, N.P., vol. 9.

[4]Observations, J. Bhattacharya, Missionary in rural Bengal, 17 Sept. 1872, enc. in N. to Argyll, 26 Sept. 1872, Argyll P., vol. 9.

majority of our people ... we have now between us and destruction nothing but the bayonets."[1] He blamed this deterioration in public sympathy squarely upon the Government:

> A studied and invariable disregard, if not actually contempt for the opinions and feelings of our subjects, is at the present day the leading characteristic of our Government in every branch of the administration. We know, or believe that we know, what is right and what is best for the people, and on this, strong in the consciousness of the best of motives, and heedless that these are wholly misunderstood by ... the millions who are affected by our acts, we insist. ... We hurry on from change to change, seeking to force in a life time growth that to be healthy must be the product of ages. We will not rest content with doing a little and doing it well, securing for each little step the foundation of popular assent. ... What fate almost inevitably awaits such rapid growths it needs no conjuror to tell us; we are building a palace on the sand, and great will be the fall thereof.[2]

This was no doubt an extreme view though it was largely supported by the officiating commissioner of police in Calcutta, Samuel Wauchope, who had been in the Bengal Civil Service for thirty years and whom Northbrook described as a "cautious, calm man".[3] "I have no doubt," Wauchope declared, "that most Hindoos distrust and dislike us at present."[4] Like Hume, he claimed that this feeling was much worse than it had formerly been and he attributed it to much the same reason. He wrote:

> The Natives look on themselves as being hustled ...

---

[1] Hume to N., 1 Aug. 1872, N.P., vol. 13.
[2] Ibid.
[3] N. to Argyll, 26 Sept. 1872, ibid., vol. 9.
[4] Wauchope to N., 8 Oct. 1872, ibid., vol. 13.

> into a state of premature civilization and wish ... to settle down. ... Natives hate change, and they say that during the last fifteen years the whole country has been turned upside down by new laws, new taxes, and new institutions.[1]

According to Northbrook, Wauchope also reported that "the news of Lord Mayo's death has been received with pleasure by the Mahomedan population of India (who consider Shere Ali [Mayo's assassin] to be a martyr), and also by many Hindoos."[2]

This evidence, coupled with his own inquiries and observations, convinced Northbrook that the discontent was indeed serious. He was satisfied, too, that it was caused by 'over-government' in recent years and particularly by the increases in direct taxation and the improvement of the laws "too quickly for the wants of the people."[3] Northbrook was not impressed by the views of those high officials who had been prominently connected with recent policies and continued to make light of the ill-feeling in the country. He informed a friend in Parliament "that there is no one who does not believe in the discontent here excepting a few officials at head quarters who have been living in a fool's paradise."[4] He was sure that the foundations of British rule were far from secure. "Things

---

[1] Ibid.
[2] N. to Argyll, 26 Sept. 1872, ibid., vol. 9.
[3] N. to Gladstone, 9 Sept. 1872, Gladstone P., Add. MSS. 44266.
[4] N. to George Glyn, 26 Sept. 1872, N.P., vol. 20.

are quiet," he wrote to Gladstone, "but I do not believe we have conciliated the affection of the people, excepting perhaps at Bombay, where the Parsis are as good as English -- In most parts of India I believe we are tolerated as being a less evil than what would be likely to follow us."[1] Considering the many indications of widespread public discontent and the violence which had marked the latter part of Mayo's rule, there can be little doubt that Northbrook's analysis was correct.

In the light of this serious situation Northbrook decided that his principal task should be to establish greater public confidence in the Government. To achieve this objective he believed that it was essential to reduce the pace at which changes and reforms had been carried out in recent years. "The more I see of the country here," he wrote to a friend on the India Council, "the more satisfied I am that we have been driving the coach too fast, and must put on the drag."[2] For the time being Northbrook was anxious "to keep things quiet and make no changes that are not absolutely required."[3] He had no intention, however, of 'putting the clock back' or stifling all progress. Northbrook was certainly no reactionary, but cautious by temperament and an 'old-style Whig' or 'moderate Liberal'

---

[1] N. to Gladstone, 9 Sept. 1872, loc. cit.
[2] N. to Mallet, 5 Nov. 1872, N.P., vol. 20.
[3] N. to Wodehouse, 29 May 1872, ibid., vol. 13.

in politics,[1] he believed that reforms should be introduced gradually. He was sure that in a conservative country like India this was particularly true. His views were well summed up by his private secretary, Evelyn Baring, when he wrote:

> Any attempts to force the country into a premature state of advancement can only produce superficial results, more apparent than real, and might, indeed, in extreme cases, or in case the attempts were too frequently repeated, jeopardise our position in the country. Hence it arises that many schemes in themselves not only unobjectionable but even meritorious for the moral and material welfare of the country, must be set aside, or ... postponed until ... a more advanced stage of public opinion renders their introduction possible.[2]

In short, Northbrook's object was to reduce the rate of change to a level which was more agreeable to the politically conscious section of the community. In view of the many reforms which his predecessor had introduced, and the unsettling effect these had produced, he was certain that India now required a period of 'steady government' -- the avoidance of unnecessary innovations in domestic affairs and the continuance of a peaceful foreign policy.

Northbrook not only reacted strongly against recent 'over-government' but also against the rather contemptuous attitude which many officials had towards Indians. Feelings

---

[1]Northbrook used both terms to describe his political position.

[2]Baring to J. Routledge, 17 May 1872, Cromer P., vol. 1— Baring stated in this letter that he was explaining Northbrook's views.

of racial superiority had no place in Northbrook's character and he had much affection for Indians. This was no doubt largely because he was a man of great human sympathy and deep religious and moral conviction, though it was also a result of his family's long connection with India[1] and his own personal association with her affairs. He was certainly expressing genuine sentiments when he informed the British Indian Association that he entered upon his duties "with a sincere affection for the Natives of India, and an earnest desire to promote their happiness."[2] He determined to try to break down prejudice against Indians by mixing socially with them.[3] The extent to which even distinguished Indians were socially ostracized by English officials is illustrated by a conversation which Mary Hobhouse recorded with the two English judges who served on the bench of the Calcutta High Court with Dwarkanath Mitra:[4]

> [Though] not distinguished for ability, [they] have both told me they could not think of asking him [Mitra] to their houses, and spoke of him in the most condescending patronising tones, as a good fellow

---

[1]Northbrook's great-grandfather had been a Chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, his grandfather had been a civil servant in Bengal, and his father had been born in Calcutta.

[2]Reply to address of B.I.A., 13 May 1872, printed in Mullick, Lord Northbrook and his Mission in India, appendix.

[3]N. to Queen, 11 Aug. 1873, N.P., vol. 8.

[4]Mitra (1833-74). Educated at Hooghly and Presidency Colleges where he achieved great academic distinction; joined Calcutta bar, 1856; High Court Judge from 1867 until his premature death in 1874.

> in his place. I cross-questioned both. One said, 'As long as they do not admit us to the society of their women, we will not admit them to that of ours'; the other said he couldn't, and evidently feared he should lose caste with the English society here if he did.[1]

Northbrook tried to break down this prejudice by giving small dinner parties to which he invited two or three Indians and about a dozen Englishmen. He did not invite Indians to Government House balls because "their ideas about dancing are so different from ours", but he invited them to the more informal parties which were held occasionally.[2] He was pleased to find that the Hobhouses at least fully shared his revulsion at the exclusiveness of the general European community. Lady Hobhouse not only invited Indians to her house, but sometimes visited prominent Hindu ladies in their own homes. Northbrook was so impressed by this that he decided his daughter, who had acquired a conversational knowledge of Hindustani, should do likewise.[3] There is no evidence that she actually did so though she once attended a party which Lady Hobhouse gave for about thirty Bengali ladies and she occasionally visited Indian girls schools.[4] Apart from his obligatory visits to various maharajas, Northbrook twice visited the home

---

[1] Mary Hobhouse, Letters from India, 1872-77, p. 89. Mary Hobhouse was the wife of Arthur Hobhouse, Legal Member of Council, 1872-77.

[2] N. to Grey, 10 Aug. 1873, N.P., Family collection.

[3] Mary Hobhouse, Letters, p. 87.

[4] Ibid., p. 195; and Lady Baring to Grey, 26 Jan. and 26 Feb. 1875, N.P., Family collection.

of Jotindra Mohan Tagore,[1] one of the leading Indians of the period, and was entertained there by amateur dramatic performances and Indian music followed by elaborate refreshments.[2] He soon developed friendly relations with many of the leading Indians with whom he came into contact. He considered that the abilities of the best of them, such as Dwarkanath Mitra, could hardly be surpassed. He believed that if Mitra were "put ... in a trio with Gladstone and Lowe ... he would not be the least clever of the three."[3] Although he did not always see eye to eye with them, he regarded such Indian statesmen as Sir Salar Jang,[4] Sir Dinkar Rao, and Sir Madhava Rao[5] as capable administrators.

Even more important, Northbrook resolved, in conducting the ordinary business of government, to pay much greater attention to the views of the Indian public, as far as

---

[1]Tagore (1831-1908). Educated in Hindu College; inherited extensive landed property; Secretary of B.I.A. throughout 1870's, President in 1879 and 1891; member of Bengal Legislative Council, 1871-72 and of Indian Legislative Council, 1877, 1879, and 1881; member of Education Commission of 1882 and Jury Commission of 1893.

[2]N. to Grey, 28 Feb. 1873, N.P., Family collection; Mary Hobhouse, Letters, pp. 103-04; and Hindoo Patriot, 8 Feb. 1875.

[3]Quoted in Mary Hobhouse, Letters, p. 89.

[4]Salar Jang (1829-83). Member of noble family of Hyderabad; educated privately; succeeded uncle as Prime Minister of Hyderabad, 1853; loyal to British during Mutiny; carried out many important administrative reforms as Prime Minister.

[5]Madhava Rao (1828-91). Maratha Brahman; son of Chief Minister of Travancore; educated in Madras; Chief Minister of Travancore, 1858-72, of Indore, 1873-75, and of Baroda, 1875-82.

these were expressed or could be determined. He was not disposed to put undue reliance upon "the governing men, who have risen to the top of the Civil Service ... but ... have for years been only in the Secretariat, and know little more practically about India than the Secretaries in the India Office at home."[1] "It seems of great importance," Northbrook wrote to the Governor of Madras, "that we should all of us take every opportunity of hearing the views of executive officers, who come more in contact with the people, and also those of Natives, whenever we can get them to speak freely."[2] He believed that it was essential to be particularly "careful in all legislation which affects the Natives."[3] He regretted that recently the Government had not always observed the rules stipulating that the original drafts of bills and the important changes made in committee should be published in the vernacular languages. Northbrook maintained that it was of "cardinal importance" that these rules should be followed.[4] He publicly promised that his Government would "use great deliberation" and consider the "feelings, prejudices, and interests" of the people in legislating for India.[5] To help ensure this

---

[1]N. to Hobart, 19 May 1872, N.P., vol. 13.
[2]Ibid.
[3]N. to Campbell, 30 July 1872, ibid.
[4]Ibid.
[5]Reply to address of Calcutta Trades' Association, 11 May 1872, printed in Mullick, Lord Northbrook and his Mission in India, appendix.

Northbrook was anxious to have more effective Indian representation on the Legislative Council. His predecessors had usually appointed only maharajas or other members of the Indian aristocracy who were not very progressive or useful in legislative debate. Northbrook did not omit the maharajas, but he appointed two Indians who were men of independent judgement and were more representative of the awakening political community. The first of these was Romanath Tagore,[1] one of the leaders of the Hindu community in Bengal, who served in the Council until 1875. Upon his retirement Northbrook appointed Narenda Krishna Deb,[2] another prominent Bengali. Although their functions were purely legislative, Northbrook regarded them as Government advisers and often consulted Tagore in particular upon executive measures. In fact, it was in this capacity that they proved most helpful for there was little activity in the Legislative Department during Northbrook's administration.

The inauguration of Northbrook's general policy of cautious and conciliatory government was facilitated by changes in the administrative personnel which occurred

---

[1]Tagore (1800-77). Educated in Calcutta; adopted theistic views of Ram Mohan Roy, was a leader of Brahma Samaj; member of Bengal Legislative Council, 1866; President of B.I.A. during most of the 1870's.

[2]Deb (1822-1903). Educated at Hindu College; municipal commissioner of Calcutta and later honorary magistrate; President and Vice-President of B.I.A. on several occasions.

around the time of his appointment. Early in 1872, Sir Philip Wodehouse became Governor of Bombay and Lord Hobart succeeded to the Governorship of Madras. Northbrook, who consulted them about his future policies, later informed Gladstone, with much satisfaction, that they "are quite agreed with me as to the policy to be pursued."[1] There were changes, too, in the Executive Council. Stephen, the energetic Law Member who had been largely responsible for the massive programme of legislation carried out during Mayo's administration, retired just before Northbrook's appointment. He was replaced by Arthur Hobhouse, an able jurist who was closely allied to Northbrook both in temperament and political views. Shortly after taking office, Northbrook advised him to go through the list of proposed legislative business "and relieve the file from all entries which are not substantial" and expressed the opinion that many of the bills might "safely be left ... in the pigeon holes of the Legislative Department for ever."[2] Hobhouse, who had no desire to make a name for himself by ambitious reforms and was fully convinced of the need to be cautious and sparing in legislation, followed this advice so faithfully that the next four years was a period of unusual quiescence in the Legislative Department. Considerably

---

[1] N. to Gladstone, 9 Sept. 1872, Gladstone P., Add. MSS. 44266.

[2] N. to Hobhouse, 18 June 1872, N.P., vol. 13.

fewer acts were passed than during the three years of Mayo's rule and none aroused serious controversy in India. Strachey, who had played such a dominant role in Mayo's Government and was strongly disliked by the Indian educated classes, went home on leave a few months after Northbrook assumed office. By the time he returned to India his term in the Council had expired and he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces -- a position in which he could exert little influence over Government policy. In fact, the only two high officials who had been closely identified with Mayo's vigorous administration and who continued to hold their positions for some time after Northbrook took over, were Temple, the Financial Member of Council, and Sir George Campbell, an extremely zealous reformer who had become Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal in 1871. Even they were obliged, as we shall see, to conform to the tone of the new regime and neither held his position for long. In 1874 Campbell retired through ill-health, while Temple, who had by this time become largely reconciled to Northbrook's policies, succeeded him in Bengal. Temple's place in the Council was filled by Sir William Muir, who had formerly been Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces and firmly supported Northbrook's general policy. Most of the new Councillors lacked the

dominant stature of their predecessors[1] while those members who continued from the previous administration[2] were not sufficiently outstanding to exercise a decisive influence over affairs. This was far from disagreeable to Northbrook who had come to India determined to rule and not merely to act as a figure-head or the instrument of his Council. The main factor, however, which was to enable him to exert firm control over the major policies of the central and provincial Governments was his tremendous capacity to master the details as well as the general principles of administrative questions.

Northbrook was also given considerable freedom by Argyll to carry out the policies which he believed to be essential for the peace and well-being of India. Argyll was not a particularly energetic Secretary of State and believed that the government of India should be largely conducted in India itself. Moreover, though he had at first opposed Northbrook's appointment, Argyll had much confidence in the new Viceroy.[3] He largely agreed with Northbrook's general policy and, much to Northbrook's

---

[1]This was particularly true of E.C. Bayley who succeeded Strachey in the Home Department.

[2]B.H. Ellis, in charge of Revenue Department, and Major-General H.W. Norman, Military Member. Lord Napier of Magdala, the Commander-in-Chief, was a man of strong views but as extraordinary member of Council had little influence over general administration.

[3]Argyll to Gladstone, 26 Feb. 1872, Gladstone P., Add. MSS. 44102.

satisfaction, endorsed his decisions upon most important questions. However, this congenial relationship between Northbrook and the home Government was to end abruptly in 1874 when the Liberals went out of office and were replaced by a Conservative Ministry under Disraeli. The Marquis of Salisbury, who became the new Secretary of State for India, not only largely disagreed with the liberal and conciliatory tone of Northbrook's administration, but was disposed to exercise strict control over affairs in India. As a result serious friction soon developed between them.

However, these difficulties lay beyond the horizon when Northbrook assumed the Governor-Generalship in May 1872. The immediate problem was to restore greater Indian confidence in the Government. Northbrook tried to do this in a general way during his first months in India by publicly declaring his firm commitment to the principles of the 1858 Proclamation, by promising to be cautious and considerate in legislation, by giving an assurance that higher education would not be sacrificed to elementary education, by holding out the prospect of extended Indian employment in the civil service, and by expressing his determination to keep the finances in a sound condition without resorting to further taxation. Since much of the discontent was caused by the Government's recent financial policy, and finance was in itself a question of vital importance, it was to this subject that Northbrook first

devoted his detailed attention. The subject was one with which he was particularly qualified to deal, for unlike most viceroys, Northbrook had an expert knowledge of finance.

Chapter II

FINANCIAL POLICY

Northbrook accepted most of the financial and economic notions common to the Liberals of his day. He firmly believed in laissez-faire economic principles. His views on public finance were strongly influenced by Gladstone, who believed in the minimum of taxation combined with the utmost economy in expenditure. Like Gladstone too, he disliked direct taxation and favoured the extension of free trade. It was these principles, modified in some cases to suit the conditions of a non-industrialized country, which were to guide his policies in India.

In Northbrook's opinion the key to a successful administration lay mainly in finance and for this reason he himself largely determined policy in this field. His principal objective was to maintain "the finances in a sound and satisfactory condition."[1] For Northbrook sound finance meant balanced budgets and, if possible, at least small annual surpluses. He was determined to achieve financial equilibrium by arranging "the Imperial expenditure ... to bring it within the ordinary sources of revenue"[2], rather than by resorting to additional taxation.

---

[1]Reply to address of Calcutta Trades' Association, 11 May 1872, printed in Mullick, Lord Northbrook and his Mission in India, appendix.

[2]Reply to address of B.I.A., 13 May 1872, ibid.

Northbrook was convinced that India was already seriously overburdened with taxation -- particularly direct taxation, in which there had been a large growth in recent years. Since this was undoubtedly one of the primary causes of the discontent prevailing in India, Northbrook resolved, within the limitations imposed by his aim of maintaining financial stability, to make every effort to reduce direct taxes. In fact, this was one of the main objectives of his financial policy to which all other schemes of fiscal reform were to be subordinated.

When Northbrook assumed office the financial situation was more satisfactory than it had been for many years. As a result of enhanced taxation and substantial retrenchments effected during Mayo's administration, the recurring budget deficits, which had been a characteristic feature of most of the previous decade, had been eliminated. In contrast to the deficit of £6.30 million between 1866 and 1868 there was a total surplus of £4.73 million for the three years of Mayo's rule. It was true that the financial prospects for 1872 seemed gloomy, largely because of a decline in the price of opium. In recent years the Government's profits from its monopoly of the sale of this drug to China had averaged £8.50 million, about one-sixth of total Government revenue. But in the budget of 1872, adopted before Northbrook's arrival in India, Temple estimated that the opium revenue for the coming year would

not exceed £7.70 million. Largely because of this decline he estimated for a surplus of only £237,000 in 1872-73.[1] As the year advanced, however, it became clear that Temple had underestimated the returns from opium as well as from other sources and that the surplus would greatly exceed his original forecast.[2] Northbrook was therefore able to turn his attention at once to the question of reducing taxation.

One of the most controversial measures of Mayo's administration had been the reintroduction of an income-tax.[3] To help achieve financial equilibrium his Government, in 1869, had imposed a tax of 1 percent on all incomes of Rs.500 and above. This had aroused considerable criticism among the most influential sections of the Indian community -- the professional and educated classes, the business and commercial interests, and the zamindars -- as well as among the Anglo-Indians. Hostility to the tax greatly intensified when, as a result of deteriorating financial conditions, the Government doubled the rate halfway through the year and raised it to over 3 percent in 1870. In many leading cities throughout the country public meetings were held to protest against it. At a meeting in Calcutta

---

[1]Financial Statement, 6 Apr. 1872, Leg. Dept. Proc., vol. 712, No. 505A, (May).

[2]The actual surplus for the year amounted to £1.77 million.

[3]An income-tax had been in force from 1860 to 1865, but had been abandoned because of public and official opposition.

a resolution was adopted condemning the raising of the income-tax rate as "impolitic, unjust, and uncalled for by the present state of the Finances."[1] Although many local officials expressed similar views, Temple and Strachey, the main exponents of the income-tax, remained largely impervious to the outcry against it.[2] However, Mayo was convinced that the income-tax was a source of great discontent[3] and in 1871 the Government lightened it considerably by reducing the rate to 1 percent and raising the minimum exemption to Rs.750. Nevertheless, criticism continued. The British Indian Association protested against the retention of the tax.[4] The Bombay Association, in a petition to the House of Commons, denounced it as "most unjust and oppressive, and productive of extensive corruption, ... and extortion" and maintained that it had "produced universal discontent ... throughout the whole extent of the British Indian territories."[5] The press, which from the first had been overwhelmingly opposed to the income-tax, also kept up its hostility. Some prominent

---

[1]Resolution adopted at Calcutta Public Meeting, 18 Apr. 1870, printed in Temple P., vol. 98.

[2]G.R.G. Hambly, "Unrest in Northern India during the Viceroyalty of Lord Mayo, 1869-1872 ...", Royal Central Asian Journal, Jan. 1961, pp. 39-40.

[3]Mayo to Argyll, 9 Nov. 1870, Argyll P., vol. 1.

[4]B.I.A. to Indian Govt., 16 Mar. 1871, printed in Temple P., vol. 98.

[5]Petition of Bombay Association and other Native Inhabitants of the Presidency, 29 Mar. 1871, P.P., vol. viii (1871), No. 363, appendix 1.

officials also strongly criticized its retention. Speaking in the debate on the subject in the Legislative Council in 1871, J.F.D. Inglis, member of the Board of Revenue of the North-Western Provinces, alleged that "for every man who paid income-tax ... twenty paid to get off" and maintained that it was "altogether unsuited to the people of the country."[1] Nor was this an extreme view, for a subsequent report from the Government of the province stated that most experienced officers shared Inglis's opinion, and that the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir William Muir, had "never witnessed anything approaching the popular discontent created by the income tax ..."[2] During the same year, Alonzo Money, member of the Board of Revenue of the Lower Provinces, also strongly criticized the income-tax.[3]

Because of the strong opposition to the tax the Government had not reached any decision on whether it should be made a permanent feature of the financial system and imposed it only on a yearly basis. However, this procedure only added to its unsettling effect upon the public and by 1871 most members of the Government agreed that it was advisable to settle the fate of the tax. Temple and

---

[1]Speech, Inglis, 17 Mar. 1871, Leg. Dept. Proc., vol. 709, No. 211, (Apr.).

[2]Govt. North-Western Provinces to Indian Govt., 3 July 1871, P.P., vol. xliv (1872), No. 289.

[3]Minute, Money, 19 Oct. 1871, ibid.

Strachey thought that it should be made permanent while most of the other Councillors favoured its retention for a limited period at least. Mayo also favoured renewing it for a number of years if by so doing he could "secure a great financial object" such as the abolition of internal customs barriers or the equalization of the salt duties, but he was opposed to "re-imposing the Income Tax 'pure and simple' for the mere purpose of showing a surplus" of £500,000.[1] However, no decision had been reached on the subject up to the time of Mayo's assassination.

This question was taken up by the acting Viceroy, Lord Napier, under whose brief rule the budget for 1872-73 was settled. Napier himself strongly opposed the retention of the tax maintaining that "the country, after all its recent burdens", had "a right to substantial and acceptable relief."[2] The majority of the Executive Council, influenced no doubt by the gravity of the recent disturbances,[3] now also favoured the abandonment of the income-tax. Temple alone advocated its retention and at a meeting of the Council early in March it was decided not to reimpose it.[4] At that time the budget estimates for the coming year showed a surplus of nearly £800,000, or £200,000 without the income-tax. But between that date and the submission

---

[1] Mayo to Argyll, 24 Jan. 1872, Argyll P., vol. 2.
[2] Napier to Argyll, 14 Mar. 1872, ibid., vol. 6.
[3] See above, pp. 14-17.
[4] Napier to Argyll, 14 Mar. 1872, loc. cit.

of the budget a month later there was a marked deterioration in the financial prospects largely because of an anticipated drop in opium receipts. According to Temple's final estimate there would be a surplus of only £237,000 even if the income-tax were retained. Since Argyll had advised that the income-tax "ought to be renewed for a year" unless "upon your Budget Estimate carefully framed there is a surplus without [it]"[1], the Executive Council, reversing its earlier decision, unanimously agreed to reimpose the tax for 1872-73 though it decided to raise the minimum exemption from Rs.750 to Rs.1000. The bill to give effect to this measure was adopted by the Legislative Council by a vote of ten to three.[2] Public opinion, however, was overwhelmingly on the side of the minority and the reimposition of the tax was widely criticized by the press.

The retention of the income-tax at such a moderate rate would probably have aroused less opposition had it not been for the unprecedented growth of provincial taxation after 1870. This growth resulted largely from the introduction in 1871 of the decentralized system of finance. Under this system the Indian Government, in an effort to improve its own financial stability, transferred to the

---

[1]Telegram, Argyll to Acting Gov.-Gen., 1 Mar. 1872, Fin. Despatches to India, vol. 14.

[2]Leg. Co. debate, 17 Apr. 1872, Leg. Dept. Proc., vol. 712, No. 508, (May). Inglis, W. Robinson, and R. Steward voted against the measure. There were no Indian members present.

provinces the administration of various services such as jails, police, education, and roads and gave them a fixed grant to meet the cost of these services.[1] Any province which was unable to confine its expenditure to the imperial assignment could increase local taxation. The way for the expansion of provincial taxation had been opened by a decision of the Secretary of State in 1870 permitting cesses for education, roads, or other public utilities to be imposed upon land provided the funds were spent locally. These cesses were to be in addition to the ordinary land revenue demand and could be imposed regardless of whether that demand had been temporarily or permanently fixed.[2] Provincial Governments quickly took advantage of this decision. Oudh, the North-Western Provinces, and the Punjab were unable to confine their expenditure to the imperial assignment and in 1871 the Indian Legislative Council adopted local rates acts for each of them.[3] These acts provided for cesses of up to 5 percent of the gross rental of estates. During the same year the Bengal Legislative Council adopted a District Road Cess Act

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 14 Dec. 1870, printed in Temple P., vol. 104. Previously the cost of these services had been settled annually by negotiation between the central Government and the provinces which in recent years had been demanding more and more funds.

[2]S.S. to Indian Govt., 12 May 1870, ibid.

[3]Provincial Taxation Reports, 1872, Enc. to Fin. Letters from India, vol. 97, No. 144.

providing for a cess of about 3 percent upon practically all landed property in the presidency. In 1871, too, a Local Rates Act, which had been passed by the Madras Legislative Council the previous year, came into force in that province.[1] That Act, which consolidated and extended existing provincial levies, provided for cesses of as much as 6 percent upon land and for a house-tax upon non-landholders. In the Central Provinces, where a local tax upon trades and professions, the pandhari tax, was already imposed, tolls were levied upon a number of important roads. Finally, the Bombay Legislative Council adopted a Non-Agricultural Taxation Act imposing a tax on the non-agricultural rural population -- a group which had previously escaped local taxation.

During the same period municipal taxation increased in a number of provinces and especially in Bombay where an act was passed in 1871 requiring towns to contribute to the cost of local police. A far greater growth however was expected to occur in Bengal as a result of the Municipalities Bill adopted by the Bengal Legislative Council shortly after Northbrook came to India. Under this Bill, which required the sanction of the Governor-General before it could become law, municipalities would

---

[1]This Act, like that of the Bengal Government, was imposed not because of the deficiency of the imperial assignment but in order to accelerate the extension of education and roads.

be obliged to provide for elementary education and for the relief of the poor in times of distress.[1] To meet the cost of these services, the municipal committees, whose numbers were to be greatly extended, would be allowed to impose a wide variety of taxes.

These increases in municipal and provincial taxation aroused almost as strong opposition as the income-tax. The Bombay Association in its petition to the House of Commons referred to earlier protested against the growth of local taxation. Shortly after Wodehouse assumed the Governorship of the province it appealed to him to abolish the non-agricultural tax, claiming that "in practice" it was levied upon "25 to 50 per cent of the agricultural population" on the plea that they carried on a "profession, trade, or calling other than the cultivation of land." "No other tax," it declared, "has produced such wide-spread discontent ... in the mofussil."[2] In Bengal, where public opinion was more effectively organized, more forceful and general opposition was expressed. Two Indian members of the Bengal Legislative Council, Digambar Mitra[3]

---

[1]Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 30 Oct. 1872, Leg. Dept. Proc., vol. 714, No. 50, (Feb.).

[2]Bombay Association to Wodehouse, 14 Aug. 1872, Enc. to Fin. Letters from India, vol. 96, No. 88.

[3]Mitra (1817-79). Businessman and zamindar. Prominent member of B.I.A., serving as Secretary, Vice-President, and President. Member of Bengal Legislative Council, 1869 and 1871-72. Appointed sheriff of Calcutta by Northbrook in 1874.

and Jotindra Mohan Tagore, opposed the Road Cess Act on the grounds that it was an infringement upon the permanent settlement and protested against the large increases in municipal taxation contemplated under the Municipalities Bill.[1] Leading inhabitants from towns all over the province petitioned the Government against the Acts. The British Indian Association, for example, warned that the Road Cess Act would "compromise the good faith of the Government with the zemindars, and through them with the whole agricultural population of Bengal"[2], and later appealed to the Secretary of State to disallow it.[3] The following comment of the People's Association of Dacca was typical of the many protests against the Municipalities Bill. "The sole object of the Bill," the Association wrote, "appears to be the imposition ... of seven or eight different taxes, each heavy and pernicious in nature ... without any advantage ... in regard to control over municipal matters."[4] Similar views were expressed in most of the vernacular and other Indian newspapers.

Northbrook was not long in office before he realized the strong opposition to the expansion of direct taxation.

---

[1]Bengal Leg. Co. debates, 3 July 1871 and 20 Jan. and 27 July 1872, Leg. Dept. Proc., vols. 711 and 714, Nos. 68, (Aug.), and 9 and 47, (Feb.) respectively.

[2]B.I.A. to Bengal Govt., 29 June 1871, Agric., Rev., and Com. Dept. Proc., vol. 680, No. 11, (Mar.).

[3]B.I.A. to S.S., 22 Feb. 1872, ibid.

[4]Dacca Association to Bengal Govt., 11 Apr. 1872, Enc. to Fin. Letters from India, vol. 96, No. 44.

Shortly after his appointment he had begun to examine the official papers on this subject and before leaving England had advised against renewing the income-tax "if the honest estimate for 1872-73 shows either a surplus or a small deficit without [it]."[1] After a few months in India he became convinced that it was absolutely essential upon political grounds to prevent further growth of direct taxation and advisable to remit some existing taxes. He felt unjustified, however, in making important modifications in the taxation system on the basis of the information then in the possession of the central Government. Consequently, in August 1872, circulars were sent to the provincial Governments requesting reports from "the best local officers who come into direct contact with the people" upon which taxes -- municipal, provincial, or imperial -- "now existing, or about to be imposed, create a feeling of discontent in the country or amongst any particular section of the people."[2] The comprehensive replies to these circulars received by the Indian Government around the end of the year largely formed the basis for Northbrook's taxation policy.

Although the provincial Governments favoured a steady expansion of local and municipal taxation, most of them

---

[1] N. to Argyll, 29 Feb. 1872, N.P., vol. 9.
[2] Indian Govt. to Provincial Govts., 17 Aug. 1872, Enc. to Fin. Letters from India, vol. 97, No. 144.

admitted that the recent increases had aroused considerable public discontent. The reports from Bombay confirmed, as Wodehouse declared, that the non-agricultural cess was "universally condemned and detested".[1] The Government of the Central Provinces stated that the pandhari tax was "sufficiently disliked to render its modification desirable."[2] The reports confirmed that the land cesses had created much discontent though the degree varied from province to province. The Madras Government admitted that the pressure of local taxation was "somewhat severely felt" and that the house-tax was "regarded with strong dislike by the great majority of the rate payers."[3] In Oudh the cesses had been imposed during the currency of a temporary land revenue settlement and the Chief Commissioner believed that "the great majority of land-owners who had been given to understand that the demand of the State had been fixed once for all at 51¼ per cent on their gross rental" considered the cesses "as a direct breach of faith."[4] The reports from local officials in Bengal indicated that the majority of the zamindars there regarded the local rates on land as a violation of the permanent settlement. Although Campbell's Government, in its zeal for reform,

---

[1]Minute, Wodehouse, 3 Nov. 1872, ibid.
[2]Govt. Central Provinces to Indian Govt., 27 Nov. 1872, ibid.
[3]Madras Govt. to Indian Govt., 31 Dec. 1872, ibid.
[4]Oudh Govt. to Indian Govt., 10 Dec. 1872, ibid.

minimized the extent of the opposition to its taxation policies, it admitted that there had been much agitation against the Road Cess Act by the most influential section of the public and that the Municipalities Bill was evoking strong opposition.[1] The existence of widespread discontent in Bengal over the new taxes was confirmed by the opinions of a number of missionaries whom Northbrook had specially consulted because he considered that on general subjects they were "the best informed men in India as to the feelings of the Natives."[2] One of the strongest warnings came from J. Bhattacharya, an Indian-born missionary stationed in rural Bengal. He claimed that the Road Cess Act had "created a sort of consternation" not only among the zamindars and professional classes but also among ryots who were apprehensive that it would lead to rent increases.[3] He also criticized the "multiplicity of taxes" which could be imposed under the Municipalities Bill and predicted that it would create "an amount of trouble, annoyance and discontent, among the people which it is impossible to conceive." Another Indian-born missionary, Gangadhar Banerji, condemned the measures in equally forceful terms.[4] Although opposition was strongest

---

[1]Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 13 Dec. 1872, ibid.
[2]N. to Mallet, 10 Oct. 1872, N.P., vol. 20.
[3]Observations, Bhattacharya, 17 Sept. 1872, enc. in N. to Argyll, 26 Sept. 1872, Argyll P., vol. 9.
[4]Observations, Banerji, undated, enc. in N. to Argyll, 3 Oct. 1872, ibid.

in Bengal, there was no doubt that discontent over the growth of local taxation was general throughout India, for, while it was true that the total amount of money to be raised was not expected to be large (probably less than £2 million annually), the taxes affected a vast number of people. No figures were available for the whole of India but in the Punjab alone land cesses were levied upon more than 2 million people in 1872.

The only imperial tax which was strongly criticized in the provincial taxation reports was the income-tax. Since the tax was levied on less than 200,000 people in 1872 and the rate was moderate, there was unanimous agreement that it caused less discontent than formerly. Nevertheless, only the Punjab and Bombay Governments expressed complete satisfaction with the tax. The other provincial Governments favoured further modifications such as the exemption of incomes derived from land, or the remission of the tax altogether. The Bengal Government stated that the impost was "associated in men's minds with ideas of frequent and sometimes unjust assessment, and with fears whether the tax may not be suddenly doubled or trebled."[1] Muir thought the tax should be maintained only if "additional income" were "needed" during the coming year.[2] Hobart,

---

[1]Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 13 Dec. 1872, Enc. to Fin. Letters from India, vol. 97, No. 144.

[2]Govt. North-Western Provinces to Indian Govt., 11 Dec. 1872, ibid.

the Governor of Madras, doubted whether there were "any considerations in its favor sufficient to counteract the extreme unpopularity of the tax with the whole European and an influential minority of the native community, and (on the other hand) the comparative unimportance of the amount which it yields to the treasury."[1] Official opinion, in short, was overwhelmingly against the income-tax.

These official reports, largely confirming the views expressed by public opinion, satisfied Northbrook that it was essential to remit some of the more objectionable direct taxes. Since Temple estimated that there would be a surplus of £800,000 for 1873-74, this could be done without jeopardizing the Government's financial stability. Northbrook therefore resolved to announce certain taxation reductions in the forthcoming budget. Although his decisions on the income-tax and provincial taxation were interrelated, it will be convenient to deal with each in turn.

Northbrook personally disliked an income-tax and believed there were too many arguments against the tax in India to retain it permanently.[2] One of the main objections to it was the inequality of incidence. Landowners, officials, and all those whose incomes could be

---

[1]Minute, Hobart, 30 Dec. 1872, ibid.
[2]Minute, N., 14 Apr. 1873, printed in Temple P., vol. 98.

accurately ascertained were forced to pay the tax in full. It was practically impossible, however, to determine the incomes of merchants and traders many of whom undoubtedly evaded the tax. The other major defect was the difficulty of eliminating extortion and corruption which often accompanied the assessment and collection of the tax. These were objections which even the strongest advocates of the Indian income-tax were unable to refute. In Northbrook's opinion these defects more than outweighed what he admitted to be the real merit of the income-tax -- namely, that it was "the sole means by which the commercial class, and especially the wealthy Native traders, ... contribute to the resources of the State."[1]

However, Northbrook objected to the income-tax mainly upon political grounds. He acknowledged that it aroused less hostility than formerly. But no reassessment had been made since 1870 and he believed that ill-feeling would revive as soon as officials began inquiring into people's incomes to bring assessments up to date. In his opinion the principal political objection to the tax was that it aggravated "all the people who had influence."[2] He believed that "Native public opinion" was formed "from above" with the "head man in a village, the principal man of a caste, &c" giving "tone to the rest below him."[3]

---

[1] Ibid.
[2] N. to Grant Duff, 8 July 1872, N.P., vol. 20.
[3] Ibid.

Because of this Northbrook was convinced that the discontent caused by the income-tax was out of all proportion to the small number of people who paid it. Moreover, the reports from local officials and missionaries indicated that some zamindars met their income-tax charges by enhancing the rent of their tenants. For these reasons Northbrook considered the retention of the income-tax a serious political liability. "It is essential to the safe government of India," he maintained, "that taxes, if they cannot always be altogether in accordance with the feelings of the people, should not be altogether opposed to them."[1]

Despite his strong objections to the income-tax however, Northbrook considered that he might be justified in retaining it for a limited period in order to remove some of the unpopular local taxes. Unlike the income-tax, these were not confined to the wealthy section of the community and Northbrook admitted that "it would be really best for the people" if some of them were given up.[2] Substantial reductions could certainly be made in local taxation if the income-tax returns of £600,000 a year were devoted to this purpose. Northbrook, who had thought of this idea himself, discussed it with the members of Council, none of whom objected "on principle to the maintenance of the

---

[1]Minute, N., 14 Apr. 1873, loc. cit.
[2]N. to Argyll, 14 Feb. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.

Income tax in order to remit other taxes."[1] Upon further examination of the scheme however, he discovered that it had two major defects. First, any large remission of local taxation would be contrary to the policy of increasing provincial responsibility as embodied in the decentralization system. Furthermore, if the income-tax returns were devoted to local purposes, the central Government would be denied a valuable source of revenue in the event of future financial difficulty. Because of these fundamental objections Northbrook rejected the idea of using the tax to relieve local taxation. In the interests of developing provincial responsibility and protecting the central Government's financial resources, his decision was sound.

Another possibility which Northbrook considered was that of retaining the income-tax as a means of modifying the salt duties -- the imperial levy which pressed most heavily on the poor. For some years the Indian Government had been anxious to reduce the inequality of these duties in different parts of the country and thus abolish internal customs barriers. The Customs Department suggested two plans by which the inequality might be reduced if the income-tax were maintained. The first plan which provided for moderate reductions would cost £314,000 while the

---

[1]N. to Argyll, 21 Feb. 1873, ibid.

second and more comprehensive one would cost £635,000.[1] However, Northbrook rejected both plans -- the first because it did not go far enough towards equalizing the duties, and the second because it was too expensive. These arguments were far from convincing. The first scheme would have made a significant step towards equalization.[2] If the Government had adopted the other plan it would still have had a surplus of about £150,000 according to the budget estimate for 1873-74. Undoubtedly the real reason why Northbrook rejected these plans was that he did not consider the salt duties to be oppressive. More significant still there was no evidence that they caused discontent.

Having decided against employing the income-tax to modify other objectionable taxes, Northbrook resolved to abandon it. He was confident that this could be done without immediate or long term financial embarrassment. Even without the income-tax it was estimated that there would be a surplus of £200,000 during the coming year. He believed that in the future there would be a "moderate and gradual increase" in the principal sources of government revenue[3] -- land, opium, salt, and customs. He did not anticipate a corresponding growth in expenditure and

---

[1] Minute, N., 14 Apr. 1873, loc. cit.

[2] The duty in Bengal would have been reduced from Rs.3-4 to Rs.3, and in upper India from Rs.3 to Rs.2-8 per maund.

[3] Minute, N., 14 Apr. 1873, loc. cit.

was determined to prevent it during his term. In his opinion, additional expenditure which might be required in certain branches of the administration could be met by economy in other branches. Should famine, war, or other unforeseen calamity place the Government in financial difficulty it would again be able to resort to the income-tax.

Northbrook informed the Executive Council of his decision at a meeting during the latter part of March. There it encountered strong opposition. Temple, the chief exponent of the income-tax, gave the following account of what occurred at that meeting:

> We urged that ... there ought to be regular discussion ... as to whether there [should] ... be an income tax.
> To this the G.G. agreed. I then formally proposed that there ought to be an income tax. ...
> Thereon opinion of each member was taken. Lord Napier [of Magdala], Mr. Ellis, & I ... spoke as strongly as we could for the proposition. Norman spoke against it. Bayley, after a few balanced remarks, inclined first to one view & then the other, said that he wd vote for giving up the tax. Hobhouse said that though he was prepared to advocate the tax as an abstract proposal, he wd vote for the G.G.[1]

Since Northbrook had the deciding vote the remission of the income-tax was approved by a majority of four to three. A few days later the Government issued a resolution announcing this decision and declaring that "no additional taxation" was required to maintain "the finances of India

---

[1]Temple to Argyll, 21 Mar. 1873, Temple P., vol. 106.

in a sound and satisfactory condition."[1]

The three members of Council who opposed remitting the tax recorded minutes dissenting from this resolution. Ellis maintained that the tax should have been reimposed as a means of equalizing the salt duties and thus "giving relief to the poorer classes."[2] Lord Napier, the Commander-in-Chief, condemned the Government for relinquishing the only tax on European and Indian business interests and bitterly criticized the continuing retrenchment upon military works.[3] The most forceful attack was made by Temple who argued that the remission of the income-tax was "injurious to the stability of the finances; to the administration of the public service; [and] to the general welfare of the community."[4] He thought that the Government could not afford the loss of a source of taxation which had yielded about £14 million since 1860. He was less optimistic than Northbrook over the general financial prospects and expected that the growth in expenditure would outstrip the expansion in the traditional sources of revenue. Temple did not think the tax caused serious discontent and like Ellis and Napier criticized

---

[1]Resolution, 28 Mar. 1873, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 733, No. 19, (May).

[2]Minute, Ellis, 31 Mar. 1873, P.P., vol. liv (1875), No. 188.

[3]Minute, Napier, 6 Apr. 1873, Fin. Dept. Proc., Sep. Rev., vol. 667, No. 3, (May).

[4]Minutes, Temple, 2 and 24 Apr. 1873, Temple P., vol. 98.

the Government for relieving the rich instead of the poor.

These criticisms led Northbrook to place on record his reasons for giving up the income-tax. He wrote an elaborate minute forcefully outlining the arguments which, as already noted, had influenced his decision.[1] In addition, he emphasized the overwhelming preponderance of opinion against the income-tax among high officials experienced in Indian affairs. Among the provincial administrators, Wodehouse of Bombay and Sir Henry Davies of the Punjab were the only ones who wholeheartedly endorsed the tax and "their immediate predecessors ... [had] held contrary views."[2] Disappointed though he was by Temple's attitude, Northbrook noted with satisfaction that the three previous Financial Members, Samuel Laing, Charles Trevelyan, and W.N. Massey, had recently condemned the income-tax before the select committee of the House of Commons on Indian finance.[3] Northbrook firmly maintained that the retention of the income-tax was financially unnecessary and politically inexpedient though the second consideration influenced him most. "The main reason for

---

[1]Minute, N., 14 Apr. 1873, printed in ibid.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.; see also P.P., vols. viii (1872) and xii (1873). This committee was established by Gladstone's Government in 1871 to inquire into general questions of Indian finance. The committee sat for four years and gathered much valuable evidence from witnesses whom it interviewed. It submitted brief yearly reports on its proceedings but fizzled out without making any formal recommendations.

not reimposing the Income Tax," he informed a friend, "is the Political advantage, I will almost say necessity, of administering a sedative over the whole of India, and the most effective act for that purpose was to give up the Income Tax."[1]

Northbrook was not satisfied merely with removing the income-tax but wished to lighten local taxes as well. He was particularly concerned over the land cesses since they had aroused such strong public opposition. Nevertheless, he decided, for a number of reasons, that these cesses should be retained. First, they were the principal source of local taxation. If they were abandoned the provinces would require more money from the central Government -- money which it could not afford to give after relinquishing the income-tax. Moreover, the policy of imposing land cesses for local purposes had been distinctly sanctioned by the Secretary of State only a few years before and was indispensable to the success of the decentralization system. Even if Northbrook had disagreed with this policy he could have done little but accept it. In fact, however, he fully approved the principle of levying local cesses on land. Nor did he consider that these cesses constituted a breach, either "legally or morally", of the permanent settlement, under which the zamindars had been promised

---

[1]N. to Halifax, 16 Apr. 1873, N.P., vol. 21/2.

that no increases would be made in the revenue demand as a result of the improved value of their land.[1] But the cesses were not levied as a result of the increased value of estates and they were imposed upon other kinds of property as well as land. Much as Northbrook believed in the "justice of imposing a Cess upon land for Local purposes in common with all other Income or property," he was convinced, however, that the policy had been applied with insufficient discretion.[2] He considered that the Government had blundered in imposing the cess in Oudh "pending the currency of a temporary settlement" and feared that the financial advantage was "far from equal to the political evil which the impression ... that there has been a breach of faith has produced."[3] He was apprehensive, too, over the political effects of the Road Cess Act in Bengal.[4] But he decided that it was impossible to modify these Acts without infringing upon the general land cess policy[5] -- a policy which had been accepted without serious protest in some provinces. The Executive Council unanimously agreed with this decision and in March 1873 the Indian Government issued a resolution firmly endorsing the principle of land cesses.[6] "His Excellency believes," the

---

[1]N. to Argyll, 8 July 1872, ibid., vol. 9.
[2]N. to Argyll, 30 Apr. 1873, ibid.
[3]Ibid.
[4]N. to Campbell, 4 Oct. 1872, ibid., vol. 13.
[5]N. to Argyll, 23 June 1873, ibid., vol. 9.
[6]Resolution, Indian Govt., 21 Mar. 1873, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 733, No. 38, (Apr.).

resolution stated, "that [notwithstanding the present discontent] the results of the policy of meeting local wants from local resources ... cannot fail to be, in the end, beneficial to the people of India." The Government urged local officials "to enlist the services of the people in carrying out the necessary local improvements for which the Local Rates have been imposed." To help minimize opposition to the cesses in Bengal it was decided that they would be enforced gradually[1] with precautions being taken "to protect the cultivating ryots from all undue or illegal exactions ... and to ensure the expenditure of the proceeds ... on local objects" so that the people might see for themselves the benefit of the taxes.

At the same time the Government declared that "no further increase of local taxation" was required, and encouraged the modification of unpopular provincial taxes in which no important principle was involved. Partly as a result of Northbrook's influence the Bombay Government had already announced the suspension of the much criticized non-agricultural tax. It had also decided that for the time being municipalities would not be obliged to contribute to the cost of local police. The Indian Government gave its official blessing to these decisions and urged the

---

[1] In October 1873 the Road Cess Act was introduced in 16 districts and its provisions were not stringently enforced. During 1874 it was extended to all except four districts.

Governments of Madras and the Central Provinces to modify the most unpopular taxes in their territories, the house-tax and the pandhari respectively. Hobart fully agreed with Northbrook's policy on direct taxation and his Government at once remitted the house-tax though it feared that local improvements such as road building would suffer as a result.[1] The Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces retained the pandhari tax, but modified it by exempting all incomes between Rs.100 and Rs.250, thereby granting relief to 125,000 people.[2] Northbrook welcomed these remissions and considered that the slowing down of local improvements was a small price to pay for bringing provincial taxation more into line with public sentiment.

The provincial taxation reports of 1872 had revealed little ill-feeling against municipal taxes except in Bengal where the Municipalities Bill had aroused great opposition. Northbrook was worried over the agitation against the measure and believed that the Bengal Government had been "very injudicious" in passing it when the Road Cess Act had "already much disturbed people's minds."[3] He considered it inadvisable to force municipalities to support elementary education when many leading Indians opposed it.

---

[1]Resolution, Madras Govt., 28 Mar. 1873, Fin. Dept. Proc., Sep. Rev., vol. 667, No. 14, (May).

[2]Govt. Central Provinces to Indian Govt., 9 May 1873, ibid., No. 1, (July). The tax continued to be imposed upon incomes between Rs.250 and Rs.1000.

[3]N. to Argyll, 31 Jan. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.

He believed, too, that the cost of providing relief in times of distress should be met out of the general provincial or imperial revenue. But his main objection to the Bill was that it would involve a large increase in taxation and therefore constitute a political danger. For these reasons he disallowed the Bill.[1] Campbell, who in his zeal for reform paid little attention to public opinion, was bitterly disappointed by the disallowance, but, availing of Northbrook's assurance that he would not object to modest reforms in the municipal laws provided they did not involve "any material increase of taxation", his Government passed a modified version of the Bill during 1873.[2] In the same year the Indian Government adopted legislation consolidating the municipal laws and extending the scope of municipal committees in the Punjab, the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and the Central Provinces. Since all these Acts contained provisions enabling the central Government to control the growth of municipal taxation, they were readily sanctioned by Northbrook.

Northbrook had embarked upon his policy of curbing direct taxation with the knowledge that it would be disliked by Argyll who had consistently supported the extension of local taxation and had been a particularly strong

---

[1]Indian Govt. to Bengal Govt., 31 Jan. 1873, Leg. Dept., Proc., vol. 714, No. 52, (Feb.).

[2]Ibid.; and Bengal Leg. Co. debates, 29 Mar. and 5 Apr. 1873, ibid., vol. 715, Nos. 10-12, (June).

defendant of the income-tax. But he did not think that Argyll would overrule his decision even on the income-tax since Gladstone and other Cabinet Ministers favoured its remission.[1] He was "quite prepared", however, for a "cold assent" to his policies.[2]

Argyll reacted as Northbrook had anticipated. He criticized much of Northbrook's policy but gave it his qualified approval. He believed that Campbell's Municipalities Bill of 1872 would have effected much needed reforms in local government in Bengal. But he agreed that the increase in taxation "may have had an alarming effect upon the people far beyond its value" and admitted that Northbrook "may, therefore, have been quite right to disallow it."[3] He was glad that Northbrook had upheld the land cesses and urged him not to deviate from this policy. He did not consider, however, that the imposition of the Oudh cess had been a blunder and hoped that Northbrook would "never indicate any opinion that such Cesses are unjust when they are imposed during the Currency of a Temporary Settlement."[4] Although Argyll favoured the steady expansion of local taxation, he agreed that it was expedient to curb its growth for the time being and therefore approved Northbrook's efforts in this direction. On

---

[1] N. to Halifax, 21 Mar. 1873, N.P., vol. 21/2.
[2] N. to Clerk, 21 Sept. 1873, ibid.
[3] Argyll to N., 26 Feb. 1873, ibid., vol. 9.
[4] Argyll to N., 28 May 1873, ibid.

political grounds, too, he approved the remission of the income-tax. "The Viceroy," he wrote to Northbrook, "is the man who has his hand on the pulse in India, and if you came to the conclusion that the abandonment of the Income tax was a necessary or highly expedient sedative, you were quite right to act on your opinion."[1] Nevertheless, he deeply regretted the abandonment of the tax. "I am still of opinion," he wrote, "that remission would have been better spent on a reduction of the Salt tax, as no body is relieved by the abandonment of the Income tax except a comparatively small and a comparatively wealthy class."[2] The tone of the official despatch on the subject was also critical though the repeal of the tax was upheld.

> After consideration of the whole subject in Council, I do not see that any conclusive objection has been shown to the policy of an Income Tax in India as a subordinate element in a general system of finance. On the contrary, ... it is better calculated than any other Tax ... to reach the wealthy mercantile and trading classes, and to counterbalance the much heavier pressure of some other Taxes on the less wealthy portion of the Community. ... Too much account need not be taken [of opposition to this form of direct taxation] which would probably subside.[3]

Some members of the India Council, notably Sir George Clerk[4]

---

[1]Argyll to N., 25 Apr. 1873, ibid.
[2]Argyll to N., 17 Apr. 1873, ibid.
[3]S.S. to Indian Govt., 6 Aug. 1873, Fin. Despatches to India, vol. 15.
[4]Clerk (1800-89). I.C.S. 1817; various appointments in north-western India; Governor, Bombay, 1847-48 and 1860-62; S. to Board of Control, 1856-58; Under-S.S. for India, 1858-60; member, Co. of India, 1863-76.

and Sir Erskine Perry[1], favoured more emphatic approval of Northbrook's policy, but they were outvoted by seven to five.[2]

Northbrook was not disconcerted over the disparaging reaction to his policy for he firmly believed that he was "bound" to do what he thought "best for the country" even though Argyll might dislike it.[3] He was sure that his policy, and particularly the remission of the income-tax, had "very greatly restored confidence" among the Indian public.[4] "In Calcutta," he wrote, "I have succeeded in bringing the leading men among the educated natives more into harmony with the Govt than has been the case for many years."[5] Nor was this an exaggeration for the Indian and European press was practically unanimous in praising the reductions in direct taxation. It was true that one or two vernacular newspapers in Bengal would have preferred the remission of the land cess instead of the income-tax, but they agreed that he had done a great service in vetoing the Municipalities Bill.[6] The British Indian Association, which had been a leading opponent of the land cess, agreed

---

[1]Perry (1806-82). Barrister and author; Judge, Bombay, 1841-47; Chief Justice, Bombay Supreme Court, 1847-52; M.P., 1854-59; member, Co. of India, 1859-82.

[2]Perry to N., 14 Aug. 1873, and Clerk to N., 19 Aug. 1873, N.P., vol. 21/1.

[3]N. to Halifax, 21 Mar. 1873, and to Clerk, 21 Sept. 1873, ibid., vol. 21/2.

[4]N. to Mallet, 28 July 1873, ibid.

[5]N. to Grey, 24 Apr. 1873, ibid., Family collection.

[6]Bengal Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 8 and 29 Apr. 1876.

with Northbrook's general taxation policy and accepted the Road Cess Act as a fait accompli.[1] Nor was support confined to India for the London Times wholeheartedly supported Northbrook's financial policy.[2] One of the most perceptive comments on the effect of the tax reductions was made by Hobart. He wrote to Northbrook:

> ... You have gone far to disabuse India of the idea that, having since the Mutiny so strengthened ourselves that we might (as we supposed) do exactly as we pleased, we were bent on the indefinite and merciless application of the fiscal screw, not for her benefit but for ours.[3]

Having relinquished a source of imperial revenue worth about £600,000 a year, Northbrook was prevented from undertaking other changes in the fiscal system which would involve a substantial and permanent loss of revenue. Nevertheless he achieved a number of important reforms. The first of these was in connection with the salt duties.

In the early 1870's the rate of salt duty varied from Rs.3-4 per maund in Bengal and Rs.3 in central and upper India to Re.1-13 in Madras and Bombay. To prevent the untaxed salt of Rajputana and the lightly-taxed salt of southern India from coming into the northern part of the country, the Government was obliged to maintain an inland customs line extending for 2500 miles from the Punjab to the Bay of Bengal. This line was expensive to maintain

---

[1] N. to Argyll, 15 May 1873, N.P., vol. 9.
[2] Editorial, 22 Apr. 1873.
[3] Hobart to N., 28 July 1873, N.P., vol. 14.

(about 13,000 officers were engaged in patrolling it), encouraged smuggling, and with the development of railways was a serious handicap to trade. Over half the line extended along the borders of princely states and could not be removed until an agreement was reached with them whereby the salt exported from their territories was taxed at its source. Although negotiations towards this end had been in progress for some time, they were not completed during Northbrook's term. But nearly 1000 miles of the line (the southern customs line) divided Bombay and Madras from adjoining British territory and Northbrook was determined to remove that barrier.

At first he had hoped to achieve that object by equalizing the duties throughout India at between Rs.2 and 2-8 per maund.[1] However, Hobart and Wodehouse objected to substantial increases in the duties on the grounds that it would cause hardship to the poorer classes.[2] Moreover, Northbrook's advisers did not anticipate that the reduction of the duties in northern India would lead to a substantial increase in salt consumption.[3] On the other hand, it was expected that consumption would decrease in southern India if duties there were raised. The scheme would therefore

---

[1]N. to Wodehouse, 25 June 1872, and to Campbell, 26 June 1872, ibid., vol. 13.

[2]Hobart to N., 5 Oct. 1872, and Wodehouse to N., 26 June 1873, ibid., vols. 13 and 14 respectively.

[3]N. to Hobart, 6 Mar. 1873, ibid., vol. 14.

have involved considerable financial risk, though the Government might have been able to afford it if the income-tax had been retained. However, as we have seen, Northbrook declined to do this mainly because he believed in the political advantage of reducing direct taxation.

Although Northbrook abandoned hope of equalizing the salt duties, he was still determined to remove the southern customs line. In 1874 the Indian Government put forward a plan whereby this might be done without any increase in the general rate of duties in Madras and Bombay.[1] This scheme provided for a graduated scale of duties in the adjoining districts of Bengal and Madras. The duty in southern Bengal would vary from Rs.2-4 at the Madras border to Rs.3-4 further north, while the Madras duty would range from Rs.2-2 at the border to Re.1-13 on the Godavari. Since most of the salt exported from Bombay to central and northern India was carried by railway, the Government proposed that it should be charged at a mileage rate varying from a few annas in districts near the presidency boundary to Re.1-3 in the northern part of the Central Provinces.[2] These proposals were accepted by the Madras and Bombay Governments and in April 1874 the Indian

---

[1]Indian Govt. to Madras Govt., 19 Feb. 1874, and to Bombay Govt., 19 Mar. 1874, Agric., Rev., and Com. Dept. Proc., vol. 695, Nos. 11 and 13, (May).

[2]There the total duty on imported salt would be Rs.3 -- the Bombay duty of Re.1-13 plus the differential duty of Re.1-3.

Government announced the abolition of the southern customs line.

This measure, which was a significant step towards the freeing of India's internal trade, was achieved at little net cost to the Indian Government. It was true that the substitution of the graduated mileage duty for the former differential charge of Re.1-3 on all salt leaving Bombay led to a slight decline in the salt revenue of the Central Provinces. But this was covered by increased sales in other parts of the country and the total revenue grew from £6.15 million in 1873 to £6.24 million in 1875. The main defects in the new system were the levying of the mileage rate on salt exported from Bombay and the complicated arrangement of graduated zones of duty in the Madras-Bengal border region. These measures were necessary, however, as long as there was a large inequality in the salt duty between Madras and Bombay and the rest of India. Northbrook remained anxious to reduce the inequality and made a final effort to do so just before leaving India. Wishing to secure a substantial surplus in his last budget, he proposed to raise the salt duty to Rs.2 in Madras and Bombay.[1] But the increase was prevented by Salisbury who maintained that with an estimated surplus of £147,000 there was no

---

[1] Indian Govt. to S.S., 7 Apr. 1876, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 962, No. 26, (May).

financial necessity for it.[1] However, the home Government was not opposed in principle to increasing the duties and in 1877 Lord Lytton, Northbrook's successor, raised them to Rs.2-8 -- a rate at which they were standardized throughout India for the remainder of the century except for a few years during the 1880's.

Another important fiscal reform introduced by Northbrook was the revision of the external customs tariff in 1875. This measure is fully discussed in a subsequent chapter[2] and only its financial aspect need be mentioned here. At a net cost of £308,000 on the basis of the 1874 customs returns, the Government reduced the general rate of import duty from 7½ to 5 percent and removed most of the existing export duties, thereby helping to promote the economic development of the country. Northbrook was confident that the reduction of the import duty would stimulate the import trade to such an extent that the loss of revenue would be recovered within a few years. His expectations were well founded for in 1876 the customs returns amounted to £2.48 million, only £195,000 below the 1874 figure, while in 1877 they increased to within £56,000 of the sum collected before his reforms were introduced. After 1877 customs revenue declined steadily for a number of years but this was because Lytton abolished most of the cotton

---

[1]Telegram, Salisbury to N., 23 Mar. 1873, quoted in ibid.

[2]See below, ch. VI.

import duties -- a measure which Northbrook had resisted on financial and political grounds.

Northbrook also gave considerable attention to land revenue questions though he was not an expert on the subject. The prolonged controversy over whether temporary settlements of the government's revenue demand should be replaced by a permanent settlement continued unabated. Northbrook had been Parliamentary Under-Secretary for India in 1862 when Wood had written his famous despatch authorizing the extension of the permanent settlement and had participated in the discussions which had preceded that decision.[1] But he had not examined the validity of the arguments which prominent officials in India had used against Wood's decision and which had led to a postponement in implementing it. Even after two years in India, Northbrook considered that he had not mastered the pros and cons of a permanent settlement well enough to give an authoritative opinion. He realized that there was much truth in the argument that a permanent settlement would prevent the government from profiting by increases in land value.[2] But he believed this disadvantage could be overcome by writing into any permanent settlement agreement certain guarantees protecting government revenue. He considered that "the State ought to retain some advantages from waste

---

[1] N. to Salisbury, 30 Apr. 1874, N.P., vol. 11.
[2] N. to Mallet, 4 May 1873, ibid., vol. 21/2.

lands being cultivated, and ... the power of revision if the value of silver ... depreciated."[1] He objected to temporary settlements partly because of the very great "evils attending re-assessments after thirty years."[2] He was convinced that resettlements, accompanied as they often were by largely enhanced revenue demands, caused great discontent among landholders. He believed that a permanent settlement would not only prevent this but would facilitate the accumulation of private capital and promote the growth of a genuine landed aristocracy. Like Halifax, Argyll, and other advocates of a permanent settlement, he considered that the emergence of such a class would be an economic advantage to India and a political asset to the British. Nevertheless, Northbrook did little to promote a permanent settlement mainly because most leading officials in India opposed it. The issue was not settled until 1883 when the idea of a permanent settlement was finally abandoned.

Though he did not take a stand on the permanent settlement, Northbrook tried to mitigate the 'evil' of the existing system by curbing exorbitant increases in the assessments. He believed that moderate assessment was economically and politically desirable.

By under-assessment all that happens is that the

---

[1] N. to Halifax, 23 Aug. 1873, ibid.
[2] N. to Salisbury, 8 Apr. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

> State loses something in land revenue, of which some part is recouped by the greater wealth of the cultivators enabling them to consume more duty-paying articles; by over-assessment the cultivators are ruined or pinched, they mortgage or sell their lands, and become a discontented, and possibly a dangerous class.[1]

He believed that the Government, "encouraged very much by Sir John Strachey", had been unduly forcing up land assessments and was particularly concerned over the large enhancements made during recent resettlements in Bombay and Oudh.[2] During his first year in office Northbrook took "every opportunity of letting [his] opinion in favour of moderation be known all over India publicly and privately."[3] Largely in deference to his views the Bombay Government considerably reduced the assessments in a number of districts and instructed survey officers to limit the average enhancement for any group of villages to 33 percent.[4] The Oudh Government, in response to pressure from Northbrook, made refunds and remissions totalling Rs.11,88,996.[5] Northbrook's policy of moderation undoubtedly had a salutary political effect -- a result which was achieved without jeopardizing the finances. In fact there

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] N. to Halifax, 2 June and 23 Aug. 1873, ibid., vol. 21/2.

[3] N. to Halifax, 2 June 1873, ibid.

[4] Resolutions, Bombay Govt., 3 Oct. 1873 and 29 Oct. 1874, Agric., Rev., and Com. Dept. Proc., vols. 681 and 683, Nos. 5, (Nov.) and 13½, (Mar.) respectively. Formerly average increases had been as high as 96 percent.

[5] Oudh Govt. to Indian Govt., 3 Dec. 1874, ibid., vol. 683, No. 49, (Mar.).

was a slight increase in land revenue returns during the period, the receipts for 1875 being £21.50 million compared with £21.35 million in 1872.

The counterpart of Northbrook's policy of moderate taxation was the maintenance of strict economy in expenditure. Apart from the financial necessity for this there was, from the laissez-faire point of view, no real justification for ever-increasing government spending. From the first Northbrook attempted to foster a spirit of economy in every branch of the administration. For convenience of discussion, expenditure will be considered under four main, though somewhat overlapping, headings of 'home charges', civil, military, and public works expenditure.

More than one-quarter of the annual expenditure of the Indian Government was devoted to the payment of 'home charges' in Britain. Some of this amount was required to meet the interest on the public debt and to purchase stores required in India, but much of it was spent on military establishments, pensions, and administrative charges connected with the India Office. Educated Indians were becoming increasingly critical of much of this expenditure. At a public meeting in Calcutta in 1870 a resolution had been adopted protesting against the large expenditure in Britain and calling for greater control over it by the authorities in India.[1] Dadabhai Naoroji, giving evidence

---

[1]Resolution, 18 Apr. 1870, printed in Temple P., vol. 98.

before the select committee of the House of Commons on Indian finance in 1873, complained of the economic hardship caused to India by the "drain" of its wealth to England.[1] Northbrook seemed concerned by these criticisms only as far as they referred to War Office charges. Like many educated Indians, he considered that these charges were excessive and firmly resisted the attempts of the War Office to transfer additional burdens to the Indian exchequer.[2] He was particularly opposed to charging India with the cost of sending military expeditions overseas and his Government protested strongly against Salisbury's decision that it should pay the expense of the force sent to Perak in 1875.[3] But his protest had no effect, and general War Office charges also increased slightly. Total expenditure in England rose from £16.23 million in 1871 to £17.57 million in 1875, though the main reason for this was the increase in 'loss by exchange' resulting from the depreciation in silver after 1874.[4]

The growth in civil administrative costs, which had been heavy after 1858, was effectively halted for the first time by the decentralization system which prevented

---

[1] Examination, Naoroji, 15 July 1873, P.P., vol. xii (1873), No. 354.

[2] N. to Salisbury, 15 May and 7 July 1874, N.P., vol. II.

[3] Indian Govt. to S.S., 14 Apr. 1876, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 962, No. 27, (Apr.); and N's evidence before Welby Commission, 3 Feb. 1897, printed in Times, 4 Feb. 1897.

[4] See below, p. 91.

the growth of expenditure in nearly a dozen departments. Nevertheless, Northbrook hoped for further savings and in August 1872 the Indian Government asked the provinces to suggest ways of reducing civil expenditure.[1] But most of the provincial Governments considered that expenditure was already too low and offered no suggestions for further retrenchments. In fact, Bombay, Bengal, and the North-Western Provinces asked for increased assignments during 1874. The following year, Salisbury suggested that a larger grant be given to Madras which, he considered, received an unfair share of the total provincial assignments.[2] But Northbrook maintained that assignments could not be raised without imposing additional taxation -- an "evil ... infinitely greater than that of postponing expenditure upon education, communications, &c."[3] Consequently, he refused to raise the provincial assignments which remained constant at about £5.15 million annually throughout his administration. He also prevented any significant increase in the cost of administrative services still under the control of the central Government.

Northbrook's principal hope of retrenchment lay in reducing military expenditure which, despite reductions during Mayo's term, still cost an average of £16.02 million

---

[1]Indian Govt. to Provincial Govts., 17 Aug. 1872, Enc. to Fin. Letters from India, vol. 97, No. 144.
[2]Salisbury to N., 26 Feb. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[3]N. to Salisbury, 26 Mar. 1875, ibid.

annually.[1] In 1873 he made proposals to Argyll for large scale reorganization of the army. Although his chief aim was to increase army efficiency, Northbrook emphasized that the reforms "would tend to give a very considerable relief to the finances of India."[2] However, Argyll thought the proposals "too radical ... to be dealt with seriously at the fag end of the London session"[3] and took no action on them. When Salisbury took office some months later he accepted Northbrook's plan for reducing the number of officers in the army Staff Corps by encouraging the older ones to retire.[4] But this resulted in no immediate financial saving and army reform aroused so much controversy in India and England that Northbrook did not press for the acceptance of his proposals for large scale reorganization. By mid-1874 he had given up hope of achieving extensive reforms or significant reductions in expenditure.[5] In fact, he had great difficulty in preventing a growth in expenditure. Throughout the period Napier, the Commander-in-Chief, exerted very strong pressure for increased military spending.[6] However, Northbrook resisted and

---

[1]This amount included the cost of military establishments in Britain.

[2]Minute, N., 4 July 1873, Argyll P., vol. 9.

[3]Argyll to N., 12 Aug. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.

[4]Salisbury to N., 17 Apr. 1874, ibid., vol. 11.

[5]N. to Salisbury, 2 June 1874, ibid.

[6]Minutes, Napier, 1 May 1874 and 11 Mar. 1875, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 734, No. 6, (Oct. 1874) and 12, (Apr. 1875) respectively.

military expenditure in 1875 was £15.31 million compared with £15.50 million in 1872.

In the early 1870's no other item of expenditure caused more concern among high officials than that on irrigation and railway construction. Until the mid-1860's these works had been undertaken by private companies backed by Government guarantee, but this system proved inefficient and costly. Consequently, in the latter part of the decade the home Government agreed that new irrigation works and railway lines should be undertaken directly by the state, and permitted the Indian Government to raise loans for projects which, upon completion, were expected to yield a profit.[1] Interest charges on the loans, like those on the guaranteed stock, were to be met from the ordinary Government revenue. Strongly convinced of the necessity for accelerating irrigation and railway development and optimistic of the ultimate financial success of the undertakings, the Indian Government sanctioned an ambitious programme of public works. Between 1867 and 1870 the unpredecented sum of £25.33 million[2], or an average of £6.33 million a year, was invested in irrigation and railways.[3] It soon became clear, however, that the Government had been over-

---

[1]P.J. Thomas, The Growth of Federal Finance in India, pp. 109-13.

[2]This included guaranteed capital.

[3]Speech, N., 5 Aug. 1875, Leg. Dept. Proc., vol. 719, No. 12, (Aug.).

confident about the financial result of these developments. Between 1870 and 1872 the net receipts from the guaranteed railways remained stagnant at about £2.60 million although the mileage of lines in operation increased from 4,963 to 5,345.[1] As a result the interest charges on the capital invested in these lines increased considerably. In 1869, when these charges were about £1 million, the Government had estimated that they would decrease at a yearly rate of £75,000.[2] According to that estimate the charge in 1872 would have been £825,000 but in fact it was over £2 million. By 1872 only 55 miles of state railways had been completed but construction was proceeding steadily and in that year the interest cost reached £130,000. Moreover, irrigation projects, in which a total of £10.66 million had been invested by 1872, were proving less profitable than had been anticipated. Argyll and other members of the home Government were particularly sceptical over the future of irrigation and railway development and worried over the growth in interest charges and the expansion of the public debt.

At first Northbrook largely shared this view and during 1872 rejected irrigation developments which had been planned for Oudh, Sind, Bombay, and the Punjab at an

---

[1]Financial Statement, Muir, 13 Mar. 1875, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 734, No. 10, (Apr.).

[2]Indian Govt. to S.S., 9 Sept. 1873, Public Works Dept. Proc., vol. 561, No. 4, (Nov.).

estimated cost of £8 million.[1] He made no corresponding cuts in railway construction because he was more firmly convinced of its merit. Irrigation might increase or stabilize agricultural output, but it could affect only a limited area. Northbrook believed that railways, on the other hand, would stimulate the economic growth of the country by developing internal markets and promoting the export trade.[2] Moreover, the extension of rail communications would make it possible to relieve food scarcity over large areas in the event of famine. Finally, railways had an incalculable strategic value. It was primarily for defensive reasons that Northbrook, in one instance, favoured a more expensive railway scheme than that adopted by his predecessor. Mayo's Government had decided to construct the Indus Valley Railway, from Kotri to Multan, and the Punjab Northern Line, from Lahore to Peshawar, on a narrow rather than on a broad guage, thereby expecting to save about £1 million. Northbrook believed that the strategic advantage of constructing these lines on the same gauge as the other trunk railways outweighed financial considerations and recommended that the former decision be reversed.[3] Argyll disagreed and shortly before resigning office instructed that the lines should be built on the narrow

---

[1]Minute, N., 14 Apr. 1873, printed in Temple P., vol. 98.
[2]N. to Argyll, 4 Aug. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.
[3]Telegram, N. to Argyll, 18 July 1873, ibid.; and N. to Mallet, 28 July 1873, ibid., vol. 21/2.

gauge.[1] However, Salisbury reversed this decision[2] and the Indian Government went ahead with the construction of both lines on the broad gauge.

Northbrook became more optimistic about the financial prospects of irrigation and railway development after examining the returns prepared by the Public Works Department in 1873. These showed that although the net receipts from the guaranteed railways had remained constant in recent years there had been a steady increase in gross receipts. The returns also indicated that the few miles of state lines in operation were proving more economic than the guaranteed railways and that many irrigation works were yielding a profit. Northbrook was much encouraged by this information. "We have no ground for apprehension," he wrote, "that either in works commenced or contemplated we have incurred too great liabilities."[3] Despite his laissez-faire beliefs, he was convinced that direct state construction of irrigation and railways was best suited to India at that time and was anxious to continue development at the maximum limit permissible without increasing the Government's annual interest charge on the invested capital. According to official estimates the net receipts from completed works would increase at a

---

[1] Telegram, Argyll to N., 18 Feb. 1874, ibid., vol. 9.
[2] Salisbury to N., 12 June 1874, ibid., vol. 11.
[3] N. to Argyll, 24 Jan. 1873, ibid., vol. 9.

sufficient rate to enable the Government to raise loans of £4.50 million a year without adding to the burden on the ordinary revenue. Northbrook believed this estimate was sound and it formed the basis of a five year programme of public works outlined by the Government in 1873. This programme provided for the construction of 2,700 miles of railway at a capital cost of over £3 million a year and the irrigation of 50,000 square miles of land at an annual capital outlay of about £1.25 million.[1] The Government estimated that the net interest charge for all guaranteed and state constructed works would decline from £2.13 million in 1873 to £1.99 million in 1877.

This programme was considered too ambitious by the home Government. Sir Louis Mallet,[2] who became Permanent Under-Secretary at the India Office early in 1874, was particularly pessimistic about the financial success of public works in India,[3] and Salisbury, who assumed office a few weeks later, was more sceptical than Argyll had been. "There is a strong feeling among most of us in this Office," Salisbury informed Northbrook, "that many of your Public

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 18 July 1873, Public Works Dept, Proc., vol. 561, No. 1, (Nov.).

[2]Mallet (1823-90). A thoroughgoing Cobdenite; joined Board of Trade as junior clerk in 1847, rising to Assistant Secretary and head of Commercial Department in 1867; played prominent part in the negotiation of a number of commercial treaties; appointed to India Council, 1872; Permanent Under-Secretary of State for India, 1874-83.

[3]Mallet to Salisbury, 29 Aug. 1874, Salisbury P., Mallet series.

Works officials are 'dreamers of dreams'."[1] He instructed the Indian Government to be more cautious in undertaking new projects and advised against financing them by loans unless it was certain that they would prove "remunerative, by yielding, in ... annual income, a sum equal to the interest on the money expended in their construction, including interest for the period subsequent to the commencement of each work during which no income is obtained."[2] He also urged greater care in framing estimates and closer supervision of actual construction. To help achieve these objectives Salisbury decided that a Public Works Member should be appointed to the Indian Executive Council and legislation to permit this was passed by Parliament in 1874.[3]

Northbrook feared that a Public Works Member, anxious to make a reputation for himself, would force up expenditure and he agreed to the measure with considerable reluctance. He was deeply concerned, too, over Salisbury's stricture upon the raising of loans for public works believing that, if strictly enforced, it would put a virtual stop to much needed development.[4] He maintained that the works were

---

[1] Salisbury to N., 24 July 1874, N.P., vol. 11.
[2] S.S. to Indian Govt., 23 July 1874, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 734, No. 9, (Nov.).
[3] See below, pp. 403-06.
[4] N. to Grey, 30 Aug. 1874, N.P., Family collection.

> essentially reproductive, in the broadest sense of the term -- I mean that whether or no they pay the full interest on the capital invested they certainly add to the general wealth of the country -- and moreover, in my opinion, they will directly or indirectly recoup to the State the full interest on the capital expended in their construction.[1]

In deference to Salisbury's views he reduced the annual capital investment from £4.50 million to £4 million, but he firmly resisted further cuts.[2] In fact, the financial returns from irrigation and railways during his term showed grounds for optimism. In his 1876 budget statement Muir announced that irrigation developments had yielded a direct net profit of 2.48 percent on the capital outlay. He estimated that the indirect gain, resulting from increased land revenue, amounted to £360,000 in 1875, making an overall profit of about 4 percent. Between 1872 and 1875 the gross receipts of the guaranteed railways increased from £6.89 to £8.26 million and the net receipts from £2.55 to £3.71 million. During the same period the net receipts from the state railways increased from £5,000 to £96,000. Northbrook was firmly convinced, therefore, that the existing rate of development could be continued without jeopardizing the finances and just before he left office the Government made a strong representation to this effect.[3]

---

[1]Speech, N., 5 Aug. 1875, Leg. Dept. Proc., vol. 719, No. 12, (Aug.).

[2]Resolution, Indian Govt., 11 June 1875, Public Works Dept. Proc., vol. 563, No. 16, (June).

[3]Indian Govt. to S.S., 7 Apr. 1876, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 962, No. 26, (May).

It also emphasized that direct construction of public works by the state was proving far more economical than guaranteed companies and strongly recommended that future works be undertaken on this system -- an interesting recommendation in view of Northbrook's laissez-faire beliefs.

In terms of his objectives, Northbrook's financial policy was highly successful for he lightened the burden of taxation considerably and by maintaining tight control over expenditure secured a surplus in three out of his four years in India. The overall result of his policy is shown in the following table.

(Figures in millions of pounds)

Year	Net Revenue	Ordinary Expenditure	Surplus or Deficit	Cash Balance	Public Debt
1872-73	50.22	48.45	+ 1.77	18.79	105.47
1873-74	49.60	51.41	- 1.81	14.03	107.53
1874-75	50.57	50.25	+ .32	15.18	118.45
1875-76	51.31	49.64	+ 1.67	16.95	122.57

The achievement of a net surplus of nearly £2 million was remarkable considering that the Bengal famine of 1873-74 cost £6.59 million, most of which was met from the ordinary revenue rather than from loans. Deducting the money spent on the famine, which, like war, was a 'calamity' for which Northbrook made no provision in formulating his policy[1], the average yearly expenditure was approximately £48 million

---

[1]Minute, N., 14 Apr. 1873, printed in Temple P., vol. 98.

-- no more than in Mayo's time. Moreover, apart from 1873, which was an exceptional year because of the famine, there was a steady growth in revenue. Northbrook was well satisfied by this achievement. It was true that the cash balances, the money kept on hand for emergencies, were £1.84 million lower in 1875 than in 1872 but they were still high enough to enable the Government to deal with any likely crisis. Nor was he concerned over the increase of £17.10 million in the public debt since most of that amount had been invested in public works.

However, Northbrook's optimism over the future of Indian finance was tempered by an unexpected difficulty which arose late in 1875 as a result of a sharp decline in the price of silver on the world markets. Since India's currency system was based on a silver standard, the cost of its annual payments to Britain, which had a gold standard, greatly increased. In his 1876 budget Muir estimated that the 'loss by exchange' would be £2.33 million during the coming year compared with £1.41 million in 1875.[1] He admitted that the sudden depreciation of silver was "the gravest /danger/ which has yet threatened the finances of India", and budgeted for a surplus of only £147,000. Anxious to secure a larger surplus Northbrook proposed raising the salt duties in Madras and Bombay -- a measure

---

[1]Financial Statement, 31 Mar. 1876, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 962, No. 27, (May).

expected to yield an additional £200,000 in revenue. As we have seen, Salisbury prevented this because he did not consider there was any financial necessity for it. But the situation proved more serious than Salisbury had anticipated. The value of the rupee continued to decline and had Northbrook remained longer in India he would probably have been obliged to increase taxation.

No other aspect of Northbrook's administration met with such unanimous public approval as his financial policy. Gladstone thoroughly approved of it, particularly the reduction in direct taxation, the reform of the customs duties, and the successful curbing of expenditure.[1] Henry Fawcett, one of the leading experts on Indian financial questions in the House of Commons, also agreed with much of Northbrook's policy. "Lord Northbrook," he declared, "had ... conducted his financial administration with extraordinary assiduity, and with an unswerving resolution to be economical ..., [and had] clearly recognized ... that not only was [India] ... poor, but that her resources for taxation were small."[2] These views were shared to a large extent by leading British newspapers such as the Times and Daily News. In India the press was virtually unanimous and especially emphatic in its praise.

---

[1]Gladstone to N., 20 Sept. 1875, N.P., vol. 23.
[2]Speech, Fawcett, 3 Aug. 1874, Hansard, vol. 221.

The Times of India, a prominent European newspaper, declared that his financial policy was "eminently successful" since he had reduced taxation and yet made "a yearly surplus one of the institutions of the country."[1] The Englishman, which on most issues was strongly hostile to Northbrook, considered that his financial policy "redeemed his administration from utter failure."[2] However, the strongest tributes of all were made by Indian newspapers. The Bengalee wrote:

> The Viceroyalty of Lord Northbrook will ever be remembered in India as a period of repose. His Lordship gave the country rest by inaugurating a new financial policy. While Lord Mayo and his advisers were recklessly increasing the pressure of direct taxation, Lord Northbrook announced that no new taxes would be levied in his time. And Lord Northbrook has kept his word. Sir George Campbell's ... Municipalities' Bill was vetoed as it proposed largely to increase local taxation; several other local taxation bills shared the same fate, because our Viceroy did not seal with his sanction any iniquitous measures of taxation unsuited to the character and habits of the people.[3]

The Hindoo Patriot expressed equally strong approval.

> We cannot fully realize the importance of the financial measures ... of Lord Northbrook unless we cast ourselves back to the time, when Lord Mayo's Government by a course of financial extravagance and a system of over-taxation filled the country with discontent from one end to the other. The late Viceroy sought to crowd the progress of fifty years in five, and the result was a pressure upon the people for additional revenue ... The leading object of the financial policy of Lord Northbrook has been to reduce the burden of taxation on the people. ...

---

[1]Editorial, 6 Jan. 1876.
[2]Editorial, 18 Apr. 1876.
[3]Editorial, 18 Mar. 1876.

> While Lord Northbrook has given substantial relief to the people from taxation, he has not in the slightest degree checked the course of progress, which the country was making under previous administrations.[1]

These views were shared to a large extent by the vernacular newspapers, many of which praised Northbrook's financial administration.[2]

This acclaim was in itself a testimony to Northbrook's achievement and on the whole it was well deserved. It is true that by twentieth century standards his policy seems rather timid and he proved to be mistaken in thinking that India could avoid establishing an income-tax as a permanent element in its fiscal system.[3] But measured in terms of the liberal economic notions of the period to which Northbrook adhered, and in terms of his objective of bringing the financial system more into line with public opinion, his policy was a notable success.

---

[1]Editorial, 5 Apr. 1875; see also Editorials, 10 Jan. and 13 Mar. 1876.

[2]Bengal Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 15 Jan., 5 Feb., 8 and 15 Apr. 1876; and North-Western Provinces Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 23 and 30 Jan. 1876.

[3]Lytton's Government, faced with a grave financial crisis as a result of the continuing depreciation in silver, famine, and war, established a license-tax, really an income-tax restricted to traders and professional people, and in 1886 this was transformed into a full-fledged income-tax.

Chapter III

EDUCATION AND THE ADMISSION OF INDIANS TO THE CIVIL SERVICE

Another subject in which Northbrook had considerable interest and one of the first to engage his attention was education policy -- a question which was causing much concern among the politically conscious section of the community.

Substantial progress had been made in education since 1854 when Wood had outlined a comprehensive programme for the expansion of education in India by the direct assistance of the State. The number of schools and colleges connected with the Education Department had risen from 500 in 1854 to around 35,000 in 1870 and the number of pupils from 43,000 to nearly 1,000,000. During the same period the annual Government expenditure on education had grown from £96,000 to some £900,000. Although the 1854 despatch had emphasized that in the past the Government had devoted its attention too exclusively to higher education and that greater efforts should be made to spread elementary education, the disproportion had continued. During the 1860's about 80 percent of the education expenditure was devoted to high schools and colleges, while elementary education continued to be comparatively neglected. Mayo and his Council firmly believed that there was no justification for the continuance of this imbalance and maintained that no educational system could "be considered sound" which

did not rest upon the principle that primary education for the masses, on whom "the wealth and prosperity of the country" depended, "ought to be one of the first objects of good government."[1] Consequently, they resolved that "henceforth the main object of the educational system in each Province" would be to provide instruction for the masses.[2] Since it was convinced that expenditure was already heavier than it could afford, the Government decided that provision for extending elementary education could only be made by effecting retrenchments in higher education. "The institutions of higher education," it declared, "should be placed on a more self-supporting basis than they are at present."[3] On another occasion it wrote:

> We must cease to support Government Colleges in competition with each other and in advance of actual requirements; we must reduce the teaching staff in those high schools where the mass of the pupils are not qualified for high school education; we must make scholarships an object of real competition, and not bestow them generally as mere subsistence allowances; and we must enforce a far more strict supervision over the administration of grants-in-aid in which ... there is at present a considerable waste of public money.[4]

By these and other means the Government aimed not only to provide for a large expansion in elementary education, but to achieve a net reduction of about £80,000 a year in

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., Oct. 1869, Home Dept. Proc., Ed., vol. 518, No. 15, (Feb.).

[2]Ibid. [3]Ibid.

[4]Indian Govt. to S.S., 8 Feb. 1870, ibid., No. 18, (Feb.).

imperial expenditure.[1] In its opinion future increases in educational expenditure would have to be provided partly from private resources and more especially from local cesses, and it was largely for this reason that it transferred education to the provinces under the decentralized system of finance.

The Indian Government considered that its general policy was particularly applicable to Bengal where higher education had made far more progress than in other parts of India but where the Government continued to spend about £150,000 annually on this branch of education compared with £50,000 on elementary education.[2] Mayo's Government not only advised the Bengal authorities to reduce this heavy expenditure on higher education, but, in a special resolution on education in that province, expressed the view that "the motives which induce the people to seek [English education] ... are *prima facie* sufficient for its rapid development without any contribution from the imperial finances."[3] It urged the Bengal Government "to reduce to the utmost the charge upon the State for English education" and to do everything possible to promote vernacular education. This resolution, which

---

[1] Indian Govt. to S.S., 18 Oct. 1869, ibid., No. 16, (Feb.).

[2] Resolution, Indian Govt., 31 Mar. 1870, ibid., vol. 33, No. 1, (May).

[3] Ibid.

was subsequently published, aroused great alarm among the educated classes, many of whom undoubtedly believed that the Government was deliberately attempting to thwart the growth of the already influential English-educated community and that its motives were partly political. These beliefs may not have been altogether unfounded considering the hostility of many of the leading Councillors towards the educated classes. In about fifty towns throughout the province irate Bengalis held public meetings to protest against the Government's policy. A public meeting held in the Calcutta Town Hall under the chairmanship of Romanath Tagore and attended by most of the educated community adopted a memorial to the Secretary of State. The memorialists admitted the importance of extending vernacular education but maintained that this should not be done at the expense of higher education. "Every civilized country," they wrote, "considers it obligatory on the State to appropriate a portion of public revenues to the promotion of liberal education, and as that education can only be attained through the medium of the English language in the present state of this country, it cannot ... be consistent with sound policy to withdraw the insignificent sum now given in aid of English education in Bengal, which is scarcely an appreciable fraction of the enormous revenues which Bengal contributes to the

imperial treasury."[1] The memorialists pointed out that Indians already directly contributed about £60,000 a year to the cost of higher education and feared that if Government assistance were withdrawn or diminished high schools and colleges would be doomed to "inevitable decay, if not absolute ruin". They maintained that another result of such a policy would be "the surrender of English education ... to the Christian Missionaries, whose avowed object it is to proselytize the people of this country and subvert their national religion." They therefore appealed to Argyll not to sanction any measure designed to impair the existing standard of higher education and thereby to check the progress of the country.

However, Argyll declined to intervene. He had already expressed his approval of the Government's general policy though he had reminded it that "those amongst whom our English system has struck the deepest root, [while] ... generally of the literary and higher castes, can, by no means, be described as belonging to the wealthier classes of society", and that consequently it was necessary to be cautious in carrying out retrenchments in higher education.[2] Moreover, in commenting on the above petition, the Indian Government absolutely denied any intention of discouraging

---

[1]Memorial of Native Inhabitants of Bengal, 2 July 1870, ibid., No. 7a, (Nov.).

[2]S.S. to Indian Govt., 26 May 1870, ibid., vol. 518, No. 19, (Feb.).

higher education, maintaining that its sole aim was to discourage "expenditure of the comparatively small funds available from Imperial Revenues on that one object, nearly to the exclusion of all other kinds of education."[1] "The opinions and intentions imputed to us," the Government continued, "have no place in our policy, and no sanction from our declarations." Argyll was satisfied by this assurance and hoped it would "put an end to the misconceptions which have arisen."[2] This reply was forwarded to Tagore by the Bengal Government, which also gave an assurance that Campbell wished to find "the means of doing justice to the more numerous classes without withdrawing the means hitherto given to the higher education."[3]

These assurances largely satisfied the educated classes,[4] but all their apprehensions were revived by the measures to give effect to the Government's policy announced by Campbell just before Northbrook assumed office. Campbell, who was described by a contemporary Indian as a man of "impulsive and restless temperament, ... implicitly believing in himself",[5] determined to reform the education

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 25 Oct. 1870, ibid., vol. 33, No. 8, (Nov.).

[2]S.S. to Indian Govt., 9 Mar. 1871, ibid., vol. 518, No. 8, (June).

[3]Bengal Govt. to Tagore, 27 Sept. 1871, Bengal Ed. Proc., vol. 162, No. 28, (Sept.).

[4]B.I.A. to N., 17 June 1872, Home Dept. Proc., Ed., vol. 520, No. 11, (Feb. 1873).

[5]Mullick, Lord Northbrook and his Mission in India, p. 35.

system in the province by giving far more support to elementary education in the vernacular and providing facilities for the study of science, engineering, and surveying in the higher institutions of learning. But this could not be done "unless ... very radical economy were effected somewhere", and, after "full consideration", the plan which Campbell "found to be most feasible" was to reduce the number of colleges teaching up to the level of Bachelor of Arts "concentrating in the remainder improved means of the highest education."[1] Berhampur College was the first to be reduced. The number of students at the college had decreased slightly in recent years and in 1870 the total enrolment was only 49, almost all of whom were in the first and second year classes.[2] Campbell considered that the small number of students who wished to proceed to the degree level might do so at the Presidency College in Calcutta, less than one hundred miles away. From the beginning of 1872 teaching at Berhampur College was confined to the first arts standard, a two year course. Early that year Campbell announced proposals for similar retrenchments in three of the five remaining Government supported colleges. Krishnagar College, which

---

[1]Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 14 Aug. 1872, Home Dept. Proc., Ed., vol. 520, No. 11, (Feb. 1873); and Resolution, Campbell, 8 Mar. 1872, Bengal Ed. Proc., vol. 163, No. 24, (Mar.).

[2]Bengal Govt. to Director of Public Instruction, 30 June 1871, Bengal Ed. Proc., vol. 162, No. 42, (June).

had an enrolment of 113 students but which was closer to Calcutta than Berhampur, was to be reduced to the first arts level at the end of the academic year.[1] Patna College, with a student population only about half that of Krishnagar, was also to be reduced at the earliest opportunity.[2] Finally, Campbell decided upon extensive reorganization of the Sanskrit College in Calcutta -- an institution which was devoted specially to the promotion of higher Sanskrit studies but which also taught enough English to enable its students to compete in the university examinations. The College was comparatively expensive to maintain and in Campbell's opinion had been "of late years turned into a sectarian institution, where 'respectable Hindoos' ... receive an ordinary education at a cheap rate, but at great expense to the Government."[3] "This state of affairs," he announced, "must certainly be brought to an end [and] as a separate institution for English ... education, the Sanskrit College must be merged in the Presidency College."[4] Only Sanskrit would be taught at the College. Campbell also took advantage of the retirement of the professor of Hindu Law at the College to abolish that chair, transferring

---

[1]Resolution, Campbell, 8 Mar. 1872, ibid., vol. 163, No. 24, (Mar.).

[2]Bengal Govt. to Director of Public Instruction, 21 Mar. 1872, Home Dept. Proc., Ed., vol. 520, No. 11, (Feb. 1873).

[3]Bengal Govt. to Director of Public Instruction, 4 Apr. 1872, Bengal Ed. Proc., vol. 163, No. 6, (Apr.).

[4]Ibid.

to another member of the staff the responsibility for teaching that subject. Once these reforms came into effect only three institutions -- the Presidency College, Dacca College, and Hooghly College, which was supported by an endowment rather than by Government -- would continue to teach up to the degree level.

Nor were Campbell's reforms limited to the colleges. He was convinced that there was "too much cramming of languages" in the high schools and decided that "no oriental classics will be compulsory" any longer.[1] However, as "a special concession to Mahomedans", whom he wished to encourage for political reasons, he decided that they might be taught Arabic or Persian whenever there was "a sufficient demand".[2] But no such concessions were allowed for Hindu students desiring to learn Sanskrit. In fact, the teaching of this language was to be confined to the last two years of high school and then only if there were ten students in each class wishing to study it. Finally, about one-quarter of the scholarships hitherto given in the field of liberal arts were to be set aside for science.

The educated Bengalis, who had put much faith in Campbell's earlier assurance that he aimed to promote elementary education without undermining higher education,

---

[1]Minute, Campbell, 4 Dec. 1871, ibid., vol. 162, No. 14, (Dec.).
[2]Ibid.

were naturally alarmed over these reforms. Indeed, he could hardly have done anything to dismay them more than to interfere with the two subjects which they cherished most dearly -- Sanskrit and English education. At the time of Northbrook's arrival in India feelings were running high on this subject.

As a Liberal Northbrook was a firm believer in educational advancement and he had a special interest in education in India, for, as Wood's private secretary, he had been associated with the drafting of the 1854 despatch. "It is one of the most gratifying recollections of my life," he declared shortly after arriving in Calcutta, "that I had the privilege, under the instructions of Lord Halifax, ... of assisting in the preparation of that Despatch."[1] He was pleased by the progress that had been made in education in India during the ensuing twenty years, but noted with regret that even so "not one-tenth of the demand for education" was being met.[2] "The task is gigantic," he declared, "and can only be achieved by efforts of the people aided and encouraged by the Government."[3]

Northbrook considered that Campbell's basic policy was in accord with the principles laid down in 1854, but

---

[1]Speech at Medical College, [May 1872], printed in Mullick, Lord Northbrook and his Mission in India, appendix.

[2]Speech at Calcutta University Convocation, 12 Mar. 1873, printed in ibid.

[3]Ibid.

believed that he was going "a little too hard" in his retrenchments in higher education.[1] He was particularly concerned over the reactions of the educated classes and in a speech at the Medical College a few weeks after his arrival in Calcutta he tried "to put ... Campbell right with the Natives as to what he has been doing in regard to education, both English and Sanscrit."[2] He announced his support for increasing emphasis on elementary education, but denied that there was any threat to higher English or Oriental education.

> I attach great importance to the maintenance of a high standard of English education in this country, because it is ... the only means, by which the ample stores of Western literature can be brought within the reach of the native of India. Following still the principles laid down in that Despatch /of 1854_7, I hold that proper encouragement should be given to the study of the ancient historical languages of India; but whilst holding this opinion, I am ... desirous of seeing the blessings of education more widely diffused amongst the great mass of people.[3]

He thought that some of Campbell's proposals had been "misunderstood" and declared that the sole object of his reforms was to carry out the principles of the 1854 despatch. Northbrook was anxious that the scope of university education should be extended beyond merely preparing students for the civil service, and, like Campbell, favoured greater concentration on civil engineering as well as on art and

---

[1] N. to Argyll, 31 Jan. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.
[2] N. to Argyll, 27 May 1872, ibid.
[3] Speech at Medical College, loc. cit.

architecture. He did not consider that these subjects were in any way foreign to India nor did he want slavish imitation of the West.

> When we recollect the great engineering works which exist to the present day, and ... when we see the magnificent remains of architecture ... [in Orissa], it is to my mind conclusive evidence that there is genius in the people of this country both in respect to engineering and ... to art, and I should like to see a wholesome rivalry established between England and India in these two great professions. ... I do not wish to see English art or French art copied ... in India. I believe ... you have ample and original material for the exercise of your art in the remains which exist of ancient art in India, which it would be far better for you to copy than to attempt servile imitations of models brought from England or elsewhere.[1]

Northbrook's emphasis upon the principles of the 1854 despatch and his assurance that they would be observed had a somewhat salutary effect upon the educated classes, but they remained hostile towards Campbell's reforms and were anxious to secure their modification. With this object in view members of the educated community from different parts of the province petitioned both Campbell and Northbrook. When the decision to reduce the status of the college at Berhampur was first announced, leading inhabitants of the district strongly protested against it,[2] and when Campbell visited the town the following year he was presented with a petition calling for its reinstatement.[3]

---

[1]Ibid.

[2]Memorial of Rai Dhunput Singh and others, 27 June 1871, Bengal Ed. Proc., vol. 162, No. 35, (July).

[3]Memorial of Residents of Moorshedabad, 21 Aug. 1872, ibid., vol. 163, No. 156, (Aug.).

The People's Association of Krishnagar made a similar protest to Northbrook against the proposal to reduce their college to the first arts standard.[1] Both petitions stated that for financial or other reasons it would be impossible for many students who wished to obtain degrees to go to Calcutta to complete them. A number of leading inhabitants of Patna strongly criticized the Government's proposals to reduce the college there "to the status of a high school" and maintained that such a measure would strike a serious blow to English education, which was just beginning to take root in Bihar.[2] The reorganization of the Sanskrit College came in for particularly strong attack. Babu Prasannakumara Sarvadhikari, the Principal of the College, pointed out that since far more time was spent on English in the Presidency College than in the Sanskrit College students would be obliged to neglect their Sanskrit to keep up on their English studies. "The inevitable effect," he warned, "will be to lower the Sanskrit standard of instruction in the Sanskrit College generally."[3] Moreover, the desire to learn English along with Sanskrit was so strong that he believed its abolition would "lead at once to a withdrawal of the entire body of

---

[1]Memorial of Nuddea Peoples' Association, 3 June 1872, Home Dept. Proc., Ed., vol. 520, No. 12, (Reb. 1873).

[2]Nawab Sohrab Jung and others to Campbell, 16 May 1872, Bengal Ed. Proc., vol. 163, No. 92, (May).

[3]Sarvadhikari to Director of Public Instruction, 13 Apr. 1872, ibid., No. 19, (June).

students and thus to a closing of the college."[1] Raja Kalikrishna, on behalf of the Sanatana Dharma Rakshini Sabha (Society for the Preservation of Traditional Religion), maintained that the Sanskrit College benefited "all religious, legal, and social matters that concern the Hindu nation" and warned that "it would tend to create a just and proper cause of discontent to the Hindus should this institution be abolished or reduced to such an extent as materially to stint its utility."[2] An equally strong petition was presented to the Bengal Government by the British Indian Association, which appealed for the retention of both the English classes and the chair of Hindu Law.[3] The Association also bitterly criticized the changes in the teaching of Sanskrit in the high schools. It protested against the special concessions granted to Muslims. It warned that to Hindus Sanskrit was more important than any other language "on the face of the earth" and that "a greater blow could not be inflicted upon ... their national literature and their advancement generally than ... by interdicting" its study in the schools.[4] Not content with these specific protests the

---

[1]Sarvadhikari to Director of Public Instruction, 23 Apr. 1872, ibid., No. 20, (June).

[2]Kalikrishna to Bengal Govt., 30 Apr. 1872, ibid., No. 16, (June).

[3]B.I.A. to Bengal Govt., 14 May 1872, ibid., No. 21, (June).

[4]B.I.A. to Bengal Govt., 2 May 1872, ibid., No. 71, (May).

Association sent a memorial to Northbrook condemning Campbell's entire education policy. It alleged that his aim was "to lower the standard of education" and that by concentrating all the "resources of the State upon the Presidency College", and by reducing "the mofussil colleges to the rank of high schools" he would achieve this object.[1] It argued that the existing number of colleges in Bengal was not "at all adequate to the wants of a large community scattered over so vast an area", and described his retrenchments as a "decidedly retrograde step". The Association pointed out that Sanskrit was a compulsory subject in the unviersity first arts examination and emphasized that the restriction upon its study in the schools would make it extremely difficult for students to pass that examination. Finally, it claimed that Campbell's policy had "produced a deep feeling of alarm, distrust, and despondency from one end of the country to the other." Similar views were expressed in petitions from the Rajshahi Association and the People's Association of Dacca as well as in many of the Indian newspapers throughout the province. Nor was criticism confined exclusively to Indians. For example, S.C. Bayley, the Commissioner of Patna, reported that the abolition of the Bachelor of Arts classes in the Patna College "would have a seriously bad effect on the minds

---

[1]B.I.A. to N., 17 June 1872, Home Dept. Proc., Ed., vol. 520, No. 11, (Feb. 1873).

of the people" and advised that they should be retained.[1] W.S. Atkinson, the director of public instruction, was opposed to the large scale retrenchments in higher education and was particularly critical of Campbell's "peremptory general order" restricting the study of Sanskrit in the schools and of the abolition of the English classes at the Sanskrit College.[2]

This strong public opposition, coupled with the fear that Northbrook might intervene to force his hand, induced Campbell to modify his reforms considerably. In view of the arguments put forward by the Principal of the Sanskrit College against the abolition of the English classes there, and of the "strong feeling of the Hindoo community on the subject", he permitted the retention of the first and second year classes.[3] As a concession to the educated classes he also agreed that the teaching of Sanskrit in the schools should begin a year earlier than he had originally ordered. Finally, he decided that Patna College should continue to teach up to the degree level.[4] The official reason given for this decision was that "the people clearly wish to retain the B.A. Classes", but the

---

[1]Bayley to Bengal Govt., 29 Aug. 1872, Bengal Ed. Proc., vol. 163, No. 77, (Sept.).

[2]Atkinson to Bengal Govt., 5 May 1872, ibid., No. 18, (June).

[3]Bengal Govt. to Director of Public Instruction, 17 May 1872, Home Dept. Proc., Ed., vol. 519, No. 3, (June).

[4]Bengal Govt. to Director of Public Instruction, 24 Sept. 1872, Bengal Ed. Proc., vol. 163, No. 80, (Sept.).

real reason was no doubt that Campbell realized that there were strong grounds for granting special concessions to Bihar where higher education was just beginning to take root. Northbrook fully agreed with these alterations and thought that it might also have been better to have restored Krishnagar College to its former status.[1] But he did not feel strongly enough on the question to interfere. On the whole he was well satisfied with the modified version of Campbell's reforms.

In the hope of reconciling the educated classes to them, the Indian Government issued a lengthy resolution in January 1873 explaining and supporting Campbell's education policy.[2] It maintained that the lowering in status of the three Colleges was not contrary to the principles of the 1854 education despatch and that university education in the province would not suffer while four institutions -- the Presidency and Hooghly Colleges serving central and west Bengal, Dacca College for east Bengal, and Patna College for Bihar -- continued to teach up to the degree level. It considered that Sanskrit had formerly been given too much emphasis in the government schools and agreed that it should not be compulsory. At the same time it noted that for those who wished to study

---

[1] N. to Argyll, 31 Jan. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.
[2] Resolution, 31 Jan. 1873, Home Dept. Proc., Ed., vol. 520, No. 15, (Feb.).

Sanskrit three years should be ample time in which to do so. The Government applauded Campbell's efforts to encourage the more practical as opposed to purely literary subjects and to extend elementary education. Unlike Campbell, however, Northbrook considered that the time had not yet arrived to force the public to contribute to the cost of elementary education and it was partly for this reason, as we have seen, that he vetoed the Bengal Municipalities Bill.[1] The Government praised the great progress which had been achieved in higher education and assured the memorialists that it had "no desire ... to depreciate the importance, or to discourage the cultivation, of high English education in Bengal." Finally, it emphasized that the modifications which Campbell had made in his original proposals indicated that he would always be willing "to give full consideration to all reasonable representations, and to act upon such of them as may be well founded." However, no further changes were made by Campbell, though his successor, Temple, in 1875 restored Krishnagar College to the degree standard[2] and permitted the teaching of Sanskrit in the district and collegiate

---

[1] See above, pp. 66-67. No reference was made to this matter in the resolution though the Bill was disallowed in the same month that the education resolution was issued.

[2] Bengal Govt. to Director of Public Instruction, 15 Nov. 1875, Bengal Ed. Proc., vol. 165, No. 11/9, (Nov.).

schools for four instead of three years.[1]

On the whole the educated Bengalis were satisfied by the modifications of Campbell's original programme and reassured by the Indian Government's resolution. The Hindoo Patriot, for example, declared that the resolution "had a most reassuring effect" for "Campbell's destructive hand was arrested and the cause of liberal education in Bengal was ensured."[2] In another reference to the same subject, it wrote:

> Under the regime of both Lords Lawrence and Mayo high education was cried down ... and great was the dissatisfaction of the people thereat. Lord Northbrook, as one of the authors of the Great Education Charter of 1854, thoroughly knew what it meant, and gave it a right interpretation, by upholding the cause of both high education and mass education.[3]

The Bengalee, too, praised Northbrook for removing "the apprehensions of the intellectual classes by upholding the principles of the Education Despatch of 1854."[4] Similar views were expressed in the vernacular newspapers. The Rajshahi Samachar, for instance, maintained that Bengalis should be "especially grateful" to Northbrook for extinguishing "the fire kindled by ... Campbell, and ... by Mayo, for the destruction of high education."[5] In short, Northbrook restored the confidence of the educated

---

[1]Minute, Temple, 26 Jan. 1875, ibid., No. 39/1, (Jan.).
[2]Editorial, 13 Mar. 1876.
[3]Editorial, 10 Jan. 1876.
[4]Editorial, 8 Jan. 1876.
[5]Editorial, 14 Jan. 1876, Bengal Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 5 Feb. 1876.

classes without destroying the more progressive features of Campbell's programme. From that time increasing efforts were made to extend elementary education, and while it was true that the system continued to be heavily weighted in favour of higher and liberal education this was partly because the politically conscious section of the community were chiefly interested in this type of education.

Apart from his service to Bengal there were other respects in which Northbrook exercised an important influence over educational developments in India. Like his predecessor, Northbrook was anxious to promote Muslim education. He believed the Muslims were far less reconciled to British rule than other sections of the community and that as long as they stood aloof from the government education system they would remain a somewhat dangerous class. He therefore fully supported the policy, initiated during Mayo's rule, of giving systematic encouragement to Muslim classical and vernacular languages as means of inducing that community to avail of the opportunities for higher education. He decided to carry this policy a step further by giving Muslim classical literature a place in the curriculum. In a resolution on Muslim education issued in 1873 the Indian Government announced that it was "very willing that the entire body of Mahomedan (as of Hindu) classic literature shall be admitted and take rank among the higher subjects of study, and that the languages shall

form an important part of the examinations for University degrees."[1] This was a concession for which the Muslim Literary Society of Calcutta had been working for many years and it was deeply grateful to Northbrook for this decision.[2] The Government also supported Sayyid Ahmad Khan's plans for the establishment of a Muslim Anglo-Vernacular College at Aligarh and gave his efforts its official blessing.[3] Northbrook showed his personal interest in the College by offering to establish a perpetual scholarship of Rs.10,000 out of his private funds.[4]

Although Northbrook directed most of his attention to higher education, he also had much interest in elementary and secondary education and made at least one important contribution towards its improvement. Most of the books in use in the schools were either western ones or, in the case of the vernacular, translations from the western. They were therefore full of descriptions and allusions altogether unfamiliar to the Indian child. This naturally encouraged mere rote learning. Northbrook was anxious to make education in the schools more meaningful and worthwhile and the Government adopted a resolution calling for

---

[1] Resolution, Indian Govt., 13 June 1873, Home Dept. Proc., Ed., vol. 520, No. 108, (June).

[2] Address to N., 15 Sept. 1873, ibid., No. 27, (Oct.).

[3] Indian Govt. to Govt. North-Western Provinces, 9 Aug. 1872, ibid., vol. 519, No. 16, (Aug.).

[4] Indian Govt. to Govt. North-Western Provinces, 22 Feb. 1876, ibid., vol. 1000, No. 21, (Feb.).

reforms. The resolution stated:

> His Excellency would ... shape the course of text books more closely toward their main object -- elementary knowledge of the language in which they are written, coupled with useful instructions in common things; he would largely substitute familiar for foreign subjects; and in examinations he would avoid testing a boy's capacity to retain and repeat what cannot yet be of use to him.[1]

Each provincial Government was instructed to appoint a special committee to revise the text books according to these general principles and work in this direction was well in progress before Northbrook left India.

One important result of the growth of education and particularly of higher education was an increasing demand by Indians for a greater share in the administration of the country. By law the ranks of the higher or Covenanted Civil Service had been open to Indians since 1833, but as long as selection was based on patronage no Indians were appointed.[2] Even after the system of selecting candidates by competitive examinations was introduced in 1853, Indians continued to be virtually excluded because of the necessity of studying and writing the examinations in Britain. The educated classes were quick to suggest that similtaneous examinations should be held in India and as more and more of them completed degrees they began to press strongly for

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 29 Mar. 1873, ibid., vol. 520, No. 43, (Mar.).

[2]H.L. Singh, Problems and Policies of the British in India, 1885-1898, p. 13.

this. However, the governing authorities in India and Britain were completely opposed to this change since it would have led to the entrance to the Covenanted Service of far more Indians than they were prepared to accept. Instead, the Indian Government decided to encourage a limited number of students to go to England to study and in 1868 established nine scholarships of £200 each, tenable for three years. But the home Government objected to the admission of even a limited number of Indians merely on the basis of intellectual capacity and the following year Argyll suspended the scholarship scheme. Informing the Indian Government of this decision, Argyll wrote:

> This principle [of competition] cannot safely be relied upon as regards the Natives of India. It is notorious that in their case mere intellectual acuteness is no indication of ruling power. In vigour, in courage and administrative ability some of the races of India most backward in education are well known to be superior to other races which, intellectually, are much more advanced. In a competitive examination the chances of a Bengalee would probably be superior to the chances of a Pathan or a Sikh. It would, nevertheless, be a dangerous experiment to place a successful student from the colleges of Calcutta in command over any of the martial tribes of Upper India.[1]

Nevertheless, the home Government realized that the claims of Indians could not be ignored and in 1870 Parliament passed an act to provide "additional facilities ... for the employment of natives of India of proved merit and ability in the Civil Service."[2] Appointments were to be

---

[1] S.S. to Indian Govt., 8 Apr. 1869, Argyll P., vol. 4.
[2] 33 Vict., c. 3, s. 6.

made by nomination rather than through competition. Regulations to give effect to the Act were to be drawn up by the Indian Government, but up to the time of Northbrook's assumption of office nearly two years later nothing had been done in this connection.

Although the educated classes really wanted to gain admission to the Civil Service through competition on equal terms with English candidates rather than by means of a system of nomination, there was some criticism of this delay. The Bombay Association, in an address to Northbrook during his visit to the presidency in November 1872, complained that no regulations had been published. "By adopting measures for admitting qualified natives freely into the Civil Service," the Association declared, "your Lordship will remedy a long-standing national grievance, impart a powerful stimulus to high class education ..., and satisfy the aspirations of the most accomplished youths of the country to distinguish themselves in the service of Her Majesty."[1] In reply, Northbrook stated that regulations were being considered by the Government. He himself had considerable sympathy with the demands of the educated classes for a greater share in the administration, and promised that the Government, "in forming [its] conclusions ... will recognize to the fullest

---

[1]Address to N., 20 Nov. 1872, Times of India, 21 Nov. 1872.

extent the desirability of gradually extending the employment of the Natives of India in several important branches of the public service."[1] He indicated that the Government hoped very shortly to submit the regulations to the Secretary of State for approval. Yet despite this assurance, nearly a year and a half passed before the draft resolutions were finally sent home. There were a number of reasons for the delay. The question was, as Northbrook admitted, "a very difficult one",[2] and, faced with the more immediately urgent problems of finance and famine during his first two years, he found little time to devote to it. Furthermore, Argyll showed little interest in the regulations. In a private letter to Northbrook early in 1873, he wrote:

> I do not clearly see what General Rules of any kind can be formulated to govern a system of patronage which ought to be entirely discretionary. Do not, therefore, think yourself under any necessity of formulating such Rules, if you think none can be prudently drawn up, unless the terms of the Act of Parliament ... compel us to have something laid down which can be considered and treated as 'Rules'.[3]

However, the Act stipulated that the Indian Government must devise regulations and, after receiving a petition from the East Indian Association eight months later complaining against the long delay, Argyll officially advised

---

[1] Reply to address, ibid.
[2] N. to Argyll, 7 Feb. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.
[3] Argyll to N., 7 Jan. 1873, ibid.

Northbrook to frame rules as soon as possible.[1] Northbrook had been aware all along that regulations were necessary and by the time Argyll's despatch reached India the slow process of obtaining the opinions of the provincial Governments and of individual members of the Executive Council upon the question had been nearly completed. Early in 1874 the Government forwarded its proposed rules to the Secretary of State.

The Act of 1870, as we have seen, was intended to provide a system whereby Indians of 'proved merit and ability' might be given 'additional facilities' for employment in the Covenanted Service. But in actual fact, the first consideration of the Government in drafting the regulations was, as Argyll had specifically advised it, to maintain the stability of British rule by ensuring the continuance of "a large proportion of British functionaries in the more important posts."[2] It was not surprising, therefore, that the regulations did not provide very liberal opportunities for the employment of Indians. Appointments were to be confined largely to those whose 'merit and ability' had been proved by previous service in the higher ranks of the subordinate Civil Service. The

---

[1] S.S. to Indian Govt., 16 Oct. 1873, Home Dept. Proc., Public, vol. 517, No. 255, (Mar.).

[2] S.S. to Indian Govt., 22 Oct. 1872, Public Despatches to India, vol. 15; and Indian Govt. to S.S., 23 Jan. 1874, Home Dept. Proc., Public, vol. 517, No. 269, (Mar.).

only exception was for barristers and advocates who could be appointed to judicial positions provided they had had some experience in the courts. There were other safeguards as well. For example, no provincial government could make any appointment without the prior sanction of the Governor-General in Council and all appointments were to be probationary for the first two years. In theory, Indians could be appointed to any office, but it was intended, as Argyll had suggested, that they should generally be given judicial rather than executive appointments. "The necessity of retaining the chief executive power in the hands of European officers is clear," the Government wrote.[1] It was proposed that for the time being Indians should receive equal pay with Europeans though this was contrary to the advice which Argyll had given. "We entertain grave objections," the Government stated, "against making a distinction in rates of pay between Europeans and Natives performing the same duties in the same grade of appointments."[2] But in the interests of economy it was anxious that Indians should eventually be paid at rates below the high salaries of Europeans. The Government suggested that this object might be "hereafter attained through some system of remodelling grades and salaries so that some of the appointments and duties to which are

---

[1] Indian Govt. to S.S., 23 Jan. 1874, ibid.
[2] Ibid.

now attached high salaries fixed upon an estimate for Europeans, may if necessary be made over to a grade carrying the same rank and authority but with emolument calculated upon the rate at which high education and capacity can be enlisted from among Natives."[1] Northbrook himself regarded the "larger employment of native, and cheaper agency" as one of the most effective means of curbing the growth in administrative costs.[2] He considered that the draft regulations were "sound enough", but thought the main "difficulty" would be "in the application of them" for he expected "to find great reluctance on the part of Local Governments to making any appointments."[3]

These regulations were not altogether satisfactory to Salisbury who had replaced Argyll by the time the Government's proposals reached Britain. Salisbury objected to appointments being so largely restricted to those who had already spent some years in the Uncovenanted Service. In the first place, he believed that this restriction would "convey vested rights" upon Indians who had risen to the highest ranks in the subordinate Civil Service.[4] "I am rather nervous," he wrote, "at the idea of any tradition of vested right growing up, and, as a consequence, a

---

[1]Ibid.
[2]N. to Mallet, 31 May 1874, N.P., vol. 22.
[3]N. to Argyll, 23 Jan. 1874, ibid., vol. 9. The provincial Governments were responsible for the great bulk of civil service appointments.
[4]Salisbury to N., 19 June 1874, ibid., vol. 11.

number of Mahomedans establishing themselves in important positions."[1] Secondly, he was convinced that Parliament had never intended that appointments should be limited in this way. The opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown was sought upon this point and they agreed that the limitation imposed by the Indian Government was unjustified.[2] For these reasons Salisbury instructed Northbrook's Government to remove this restriction from the rules for appointments. He certainly did not propose the change out of any desire to facilitate the appointment of a larger number of Indians than the original rules would have allowed. In fact he was more wary than Northbrook over employing Indians. He was doubtful of their integrity and loyalty and wondered if it would ever be safe to employ them in positions of "real trust".[3] As a safeguard against "the danger of a Viceroy being bitten with the mania which occasionally attacks our Residents, and putting Natives into all the chief posts of confidence", Salisbury proposed that no permanent appointment should be made without the previous sanction of the Secretary of State.[4]

Northbrook disliked the modifications proposed by

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] S.S. to Indian Govt., 20 Aug. 1874, Home Dept. Proc., Public, vol. 517, No. 272, (Mar.).

[3] Salisbury to Temple, 12 Mar. and 2 Apr. 1875, Salisbury P., Letter Book I.

[4] Salisbury to N., 19 Feb. 1875, N.P., vol. 12; and S.S. to Indian Govt., 20 Aug. 1874, loc. cit.

Salisbury. The original rules had been designed mainly to provide a system whereby Indians who had shown capability in the subordinate Civil Service could be promoted to the Covenanted Service, which was still virtually the exclusive preserve of Europeans, and Northbrook still preferred giving "a distinct indication that service under Government affords the best test we can find of 'merit and ability'."[1] But since Salisbury had "the duty of approving ... the rules", Northbrook "felt bound" to carry out his opinions without "any further argument".[2] He objected, however, to subjecting appointments to the previous approval of the Secretary of State. "The general principle as to ... appointments," he declared, "is that those made in India, with a few exceptions regarding the very highest, should be made by the Government of India."[3] He proposed instead that the Secretary of State's power should be limited to vetoing appointments of which he disapproved. Salisbury consented to this modification[4] and the rules were finally published in mid-1875.

The educated classes, who had been hoping that they would at last be given liberal opportunities of entering the Covenanted Service, were disappointed by them. The

---

[1] N. to Salisbury, 22 Jan. 1875, N.P., vol. 12; and Indian Govt. to S.S., 22 Jan. 1875, Home Dept. Proc., Public, vol. 517, No. 274, (Mar.).
[2] N. to Salisbury, 22 Jan. 1875, loc. cit.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Salisbury to N., 19 Feb. 1875, ibid.

Hindoo Patriot, which was generally well disposed toward Northbrook's Government, strongly condemned the regulations. They were "hedged in by so many contingent provisions" that the editor feared they would "operate as a deterent rather than an encouragement to native candidates for the service."[1] He was opposed to appointments being made solely by nomination and thought the system should be "combined with that of competition". Sadadarsha, an Anglo-Hindi newspaper published in Delhi, was even more critical. It noted that since all appointments were to be probationary Indians would be at the mercy of their immediate superiors. It expected that in practice the premium would be placed upon "sycophancy and kow-towing" rather than upon "merit and ability" and doubted whether any "honest and independent" Indian would want to be appointed under these rules.[2] From the illiberal nature of the rules and the five years delay there had been in formulating them, the editor concluded that the Government had no intention of admitting any worthwhile number of Indians into the Covenanted Service. He predicted that the regulations would "remain a dead letter". There can be little doubt that these two newspapers expressed the views of most educated Indians on the subject.

---

[1]Editorial, 16 Aug. 1875.
[2]Editorial, 6 Sept. 1875, North-Western Provinces Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 12 Sept. 1875.

With such hostility on the part of the educated community it is unlikely that these regulations could ever have been applied with much success. The principal cause, however, of the virtually complete failure with which they eventually met was the reluctance of the provincial authorities to place Indians in important positions. This was shown by their replies to the central Government's request for suggestions on ways of applying the rules.[1] The only favourable reply came from the Bengal Government which recommended the appointment of two Indians. The other provincial Governments objected even to this limited scheme and did not propose a single appointment. By the time these replies were received Northbrook had already resigned and up to the time he left India in 1876 not a single appointment had been made under the new regulations. Lytton made no real attempt to apply the regulations[2] but instead established the Statutory Civil Service. This scheme was an improvement on the earlier one in that it reserved one-sixth of the higher administrative positions for Indians, but in other respects it was less liberal than the former 1875 regulations. The Statutory Service was not on a par with the ordinary Covenanted Service but inferior to it as far as the rank of appointments, salaries,

---

[1]Minute, A. Howell, Officiating Secretary of Home Dept., 9 Mar. 1877, Lytton P., vol. 23/1.

[2]Not more than three Indians were appointed under them.

and prestige were concerned.[1] The educated classes disliked the Statutory Service as much or more than the 1875 regulations and in practice the system did not prove very successful.

Educated Indians were not only disappointed over the rules which Northbrook's Government had adopted to give effect to the 1870 Act, but many of them feared that once the system of nomination came into operation they would be completely debarred from writing the competitive examinations in Britain and gaining access to the Covenanted Service in that way.[2] However, Northbrook believed that Indians should be allowed to compete in these examinations at least until some other satisfactory method had been devised for admitting them to high government offices. It was true that he did not consider public competition to be "the best means of obtaining Natives of India for the public service",[3] and, in the address to the Bombay Association referred to earlier, he declared that "a mere test of intellectual capacity at an early age is not suited under the present conditions of India to form the sole test of the fitness of Natives for employment in offices of importance."[4] This statement caused considerable

---

[1] N.C. Roy, The Civil Service in India, pp. 119-20.
[2] Editorial, Sadadarsha, 6 Sept. 1875, North-Western Provinces Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 12 Sept. 1875.
[3] N. to Salisbury, 30 Sept. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[4] Reply to address of Bombay Association, 20 Nov. 1872, Times of India, 21 Nov. 1872.

dismay among the educated community for although less than a dozen Indians had so far been successful in the competitive examinations[1] they wanted most of all to be able to compete with Englishmen on equal terms. But Northbrook had not been thinking of the competitive examinations in Britain when he made that statement, but had used the argument solely as grounds for refusing to introduce such examinations in India -- fearing that this would result in too many Indians entering the Service. He took advantage of his Convocation address at Calcutta University some months later to clarify his statement. "My remarks," he declared, "were not meant to refer to the competitive examination which is held in England ..., to which ... all the subjects of Her Majesty, of whatever race they may be, ... are by law eligible to be admitted."[2] Northbrook was

---

[1]One of these, Surendranath Banerjea, who had served for a time as assistant magistrate of Sylhet, was dismissed from the Service in 1874 after having been found guilty by a Commission of three European officials of an "intentional violation of justice" and of causing "substantial wrong, in order to cover his own judicial irregularities." [Indian Govt. to S.S., 6 Feb. 1874, Home Dept. Proc., Public, vol. 517, No. 210, (May).] Northbrook's "desire was ... that he might be retained in the service", but after examining the official papers he concluded that "the case was bad", [N. to Argyll, 6 Feb. 1874, N.P., vol. 9.] and endorsed Campbell's recommendation for his dismissal. The Indian Government pointed out that a European official had been dismissed in 1870 for somewhat similar misconduct. As in the case of all such dismissed officers, Banerjea was given a "compassionate allowance" amounting in his case to Rs.50 per month.

[2]Address, 12 Mar. 1873, printed in Mullick, Lord Northbrook and his Mission in India, appendix.

anxious that no obstacle should be erected to prevent limited numbers of Indians from competing in these examinations.

This consideration influenced him in forming his conclusions upon the question of selecting and training candidates for the Covenanted Services when it came up for review in 1875. One of the most important questions involved, and one of vital interest to the Indian educated community, was that of the age for admission to the examinations. Since 1864 the minimum age had been 17 and the maximum 21 -- the latter being just high enough to enable Indian students of first class calibre to complete their university education in time to write the examination. However, disagreement over whether these age limits were the most suitable had arisen among the authorities in Britain. Some officials claimed that with a maximum age of 21 and with two further years of probationary training in England the age at which young civilians proceeded to India was "too advanced".[1] This view was supported by H.G. Liddell, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, who proposed that the maximum limit be lowered to 18 years. On the other hand, some officials maintained that if the present maximum age were reduced young civilians going to India would be both inexperienced and inadequately educated.

---

[1]Mallet to Civil Service Commissioners, 31 July 1874, Home Dept. Proc., Public, vol. 517, No. 202A, (June).

This view was strongly supported by Professor Jowett, Master of Balliol, who suggested that the limit should be raised to 22 years. The question was one of such controversy and importance that Northbrook gave it his personal attention and then stated his conclusions in a carefully reasoned minute. He noted that one of the main principles laid down by Lord Macaulay's Committee in 1854 was that the examinations should be arranged so that those men who had completed their general education could be selected for the Civil Service.[1] In other words, all students who wished to obtain a university degree were to be given the opportunity of doing so before writing the civil service examination. This would be practically impossible if the maximum age were reduced below 21 years. Even at the prevailing limit it was not always possible for candidates to complete their university education. Northbrook, therefore, strongly recommended that the minimum and maximum ages be raised to 19 and 22 respectively. To prevent a further increase in the age at which officials took up their appointments, he proposed that the period of special training following the completion of the examination be reduced from two years to one. To strengthen his case against a reduction of the existing maximum age, Northbrook pointed out that a large majority of the members already

---

[1]Minute, 22 Sept. 1875, ibid., No. 316, (Sept.).

in the service were opposed to it. The Government had consulted 101 civil servants of all ranks upon the regulations for selecting and training candidates and only 5 had failed to give an opinion on the 'age' question. "Of the remaining 96," Northbrook wrote, "only 27 recommended a reduction of the present higher limit, 36 would retain the present limits, and 33 would raise the maximum age ..."[1] The only Indian who had been consulted, Nanabhai Haridas, Judge of the Bombay High Court, maintained that it was "absolutely necessary that the existing limit should be raised ... if the natural aspirations of the educated natives of India ... to be admitted to a fair share in the administration of their own country are to be respected."[2] Northbrook was much influenced by his opinion and specially referred to it in his minute. Although his primary aim was to improve the educational standards of the English civilians, he emphasized that the higher ages would be well suited to the courses of Indian universities. In fact, the change would have enabled an increasing number of Indians to compete in the examinations.

However, few of the top officials in India supported Northbrook's recommendation for raising the age limits. Of the six members of the Executive Council, two thought

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] Haridas to Bombay Govt., 17 Aug. 1875, P.P., vol. lv (1876), No. C.1446.

the existing limits should be maintained, three recommended that they should be reduced, and only one favoured raising the ages. Such prominent provincial administrators as Temple, Strachey, and Wodehouse also recommended a reduction in the maximum age limit. In the India Council too, opinion was unanimously in favour of lowering the maximum age limit, most of the members agreeing with the proposal of Sir Henry Maine that it should be fixed at 19 years. Under this scheme candidates would write the competitive examinations upon the completion of public school education and those who were successful would be encouraged to go to university by being given a subsistence allowance. Salisbury endorsed this proposal and in a despatch to the Indian Government early in 1876 informed it of his decision. The official reason given for adopting this scheme was that university education could not "be ensured ... by any other".[1] There can be little doubt, however, in view of the strong opposition of Salisbury and the Council to admitting Indians to the Covenanted Service on the basis of competitive examinations, that the reduction was designed partly as a practical means of debarring them from competition.

Salisbury's decision, announced about the time Northbrook left India, was received with extreme regret by the

---

[1]S.S. to Indian Govt., 24 Feb. 1876, ibid.

educated community, and was severely condemned by the vernacular and English language newspapers. The Education Gazette, for example, complained that the reduction would virtually shut "the doors of the Civil Service against the natives of India" and regretted that Northbrook's recommendations had been ignored.[1] The Hindoo Patriot forcefully expressed similar views.[2] In fact, the reduction of the age limit provided an effective rallying cause for the educated classes and agitation on the subject became nationwide almost from the very beginning.

Northbrook, who had learned of Salisbury's decision with considerable regret, continued to sympathize with this cause. He urged his first Liberal successor, Lord Ripon, to consider the question and informed him that he thought the reduction in age had done much harm.[3] Ripon agreed and recommended that the maximum age be raised to 21, but the Secretary of State did not share his sympathy for Indian ambitions and refused to make any change.[4] Though this refusal was made by one of his own Cabinet colleagues,[5] Northbrook still remained anxious to secure greater opportunities for Indians. In a letter to Lord

---

[1]Editorial, 21 Apr. 1876, Bengal Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 29 Apr. 1876.

[2]Editorial, 17 Apr. 1876.

[3]N. to Ripon, 4 Aug. 1882, N.P., vol. 2.

[4]S. Gopal, The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon, pp. 167-71.

[5]Northbrook was First Lord of the Admiralty in Gladstone's Government of 1880-85.

Dufferin shortly after his appointment as Viceroy, Northbrook emphasized the great importance, as well as the many difficulties, of extending the employment of Indians. He wrote:

> The Civil Servants ... have strongly ingrained in their minds, excepting some of the very best of them, ... that no one but an Englishman can do anything. ... You will find a good deal of quiet opposition to any efforts you may make to employ largely educated Natives.
>
> This however is an absolute necessity; as Natives acquire an education nearly equal to ours, go to our Universities, and are called to our Bar, there must be serious discontent if we do not manage to satisfy their legitimate ambition by giving them a fair share in the Government of their own Country.[1]

However, except for a small minority of the Liberal party who were especially sympathetic towards Indian aspirations, British statesmen were slow to accept the logical outcome of the development of education in the country much less the justice of the Indian demands. It was not until the last decade of the century when the issue had become a national grievance that the ages for admission to the examinations were finally raised.

---

[1]N. to Dufferin, 8 Sept. 1884, N.P., vol. 5.

Chapter IV

THE FAMINE OF 1873-74

During the nineteenth century, as from time immemorial, large parts of India were frequently devastated by famine. These outbreaks were caused primarily by deficiencies in the customary rainfall which led in turn to the failure of the food crops on which the population depended for subsistence. The East India Company had done little to deal with these calamities and large numbers of people had died during each serious outbreak of famine.[1] In fact, as long as communications remained undeveloped and the bullock cart continued to be the chief means of overland transport, little could be done to augment the food supplies of the affected regions and thus avert disaster. Under these conditions famine meant an absolute dearth of food. But with the development of railways in India after the middle of the century it became possible for the first time to transport large stocks of food over long distances and thus reduce deficiencies in areas of scarcity. Consequently, at least in districts accessible to the railway lines, the problem of famine largely changed from that of supplying food to that of providing credit whereby the poorer classes, who could not afford to pay

---

[1] A. Loveday, The History and Economics of Indian Famines, pp. 29-43.

the high prices which always prevailed during times of scarcity, could purchase it. By the early 1870's when many of the trunk railway lines were completed important progress had already been made in evolving a system of famine relief.

The first serious effort by the British to deal with famine upon some sort of comprehensive principles was made in 1860. When the autumn crops failed in much of upper India in that year, the Government accepted responsibility for providing relief. It opened ten large relief works of "permanent utility" to provide employment for the able-bodied, and a substantial number of minor works for people who were unable to travel far from their homes.[1] Wages were fixed at a bare subsistence level and paid either in cash or in cooked food. Altogether about 35,000 people were employed for ten months at a cost of Rs.12,40,000. Landowners who did not require work but yet needed assistance to tide them over the period of difficulty were given loans amounting to a total of Rs.6,30,000. Gratuitous relief, the funds for which were raised mainly by public subscription, was given to the infirm and destitute, many of whom were assembled in poorhouses. Despite these measures it was estimated that at least 400,000 people died as a result of the famine.

---

[1] Indian Famine Commission Report (1880), vol. 2, pp. 32-33.

The general policies laid down in 1860 were applied, though not very effectively, in the two subsequent famines of the decade. In 1865 there was extensive drought in eastern India, but officials were slow to organize relief and in Madras and Bihar there was considerable distress and heavy mortality during the following year. The drought was most intense however in Orissa, where nearly two-thirds of the main rice crop was lost. Famine had not occurred there for many years and neither the local officials nor the Bengal Government realized the seriousness of the situation. Suddenly in May 1866 it became clear that there was practically no food in the province.[1] By then it was virtually impossible to import supplies. Orissa had no railways, roads were inadequate, and with the beginning of the southern monsoon sea communications were interrupted. Under these circumstances the laws of supply and demand proved completely inoperative. Although the Government intervened it succeeded in importing only 10,000 tons of grain by the end of November. This relieved only a small proportion of those in distress and it was estimated that one-third of the population, or nearly a million people, died from famine. The tragedy aroused strong humanitarian feelings in England and disturbed many prominent officials in India. At the instructions

---

[1]Ibid., vol. 1, p. 13.

of the central Government a committee under the chairmanship of Sir George Campbell conducted a thorough inquiry into the famine. Its report laid the foundation for a more definite and energetic policy. When famine threatened parts of upper India again in 1868, the Government declared for the first time that district officers would be held personally responsible that no preventable deaths should occur.[1] Relief works were organized on a more extensive scale than ever before and the Government assumed a greater responsibility for gratuitous relief. Nevertheless, mortality was at least as heavy as it had been in Orissa, partly because the Government's relief arrangements were overwhelmed by the great influx into British territory of famine-stricken inhabitants of Rajputana. This extensive death-rate strengthened the determination of leading officials in India and England to prevent such an occurrence during the next outbreak of famine.

When the autumn rains, which were essential not only for the success of the principal rice crop -- harvested in November and December -- but for the sowing of the spring crops, were seriously deficient throughout the central and north-western regions of the Bengal Presidency in 1873, the authorities quickly responded to the danger.[2]

---

[1] Ibid., p. 15.

[2] See map II at the back for the area in which famine conditions developed.

Sir George Campbell, the Lieutenant-Governor, promptly informed Northbrook of the prospect of scarcity being widespread and of famine developing in some areas. He was determined that the Bengal administration should not again be discredited as it had been by the Orissa failure and was anxious that preparations should be made at once to avert distress.[1] Upon receiving the news Northbrook immediately left Simla and, accompanied by Temple, returned to Calcutta to make arrangements with the Bengal Government for meeting the crisis.

Northbrook was as anxious as Campbell to prevent another famine disaster. He agreed with the high ideal which had been set in 1868 and resolved that on this occasion the Government would use "every available means, at whatever cost, to prevent so far as they can, any loss of ... lives."[2] He regarded famine as an emergency which fully justified the abandonment of his policy of stringent economy in expenditure. "I hold," he declared, "that there is no more legitimate occasion upon which to spend ... the whole resources of the State than when an immense population is stricken [by famine]."[3] It has been asserted by a recent writer on the subject of Indian

---

[1]Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 23 Oct. 1873, Agric., Rev. and Com. Dept. Proc., Famine, [hereafter referred to as Famine Proc.], vol. 685, No. 1, (Dec.).

[2]Indian Govt. to S.S., 7 Nov. 1873, ibid., No. 11, (Dec.).

[3]N. to Mallet, 31 May 1874, N.P., vol. 22.

famines that the Government's policy was torn between the opposing considerations of "saving life" and "securing maximum economy in expenditure",[1] but at least on this occasion there was no such conflict for Northbrook unquestionably put the former object first. His motives in favouring vigorous Government action to save life were to a large extent humanitarian though he was also influenced by economic and political considerations. If large areas were depopulated by famine, the loss in land revenue in particular was certain to be heavy. Northbrook was convinced too that "no firmer hold can be taken of this vast country by us aliens than by establishing the conviction in the minds of the people that they are saved in time of danger by the exertions of a vigorous executive."[2] It was largely for political reasons that Northbrook postponed the durbars to be held that autumn in Agra and Lucknow. He did this partly to prevent an extra demand for grain, but also to show the public that the Government was more concerned with meeting the famine than with putting on an expensive display.[3]

In deciding upon the general policies to be pursued Northbrook was guided to a large extent by the experience gained from recent famines. Former experience had shown

---

[1] B.M. Bhatia, Famines in India, 1850-1945, p. 110.
[2] N. to Mallet, 31 May 1874, loc. cit.
[3] N. to Eden, 2 Nov. 1873, ibid., vol. 14.

that what was required at the beginning of a period of scarcity was not food but employment, particularly for the floating labour population which was ordinarily engaged in agriculture. Northbrook therefore agreed to the inauguration of an extensive programme of public works. The Government at once authorized the extension of the Son irrigation development scheme, which had already been in progress for some years, and the beginning of construction of the Bengal Northern Railway for which plans had recently been completed.[1] A few weeks later it sanctioned the building of embankments along parts of the Gandak river in north-western Bihar, an area severely hit by the drought. Northbrook also authorized the Bengal Government to begin local relief works as soon as the need for them occurred. Large numbers of labourers would be congregated upon the imperial and local works often in areas remote from the principal markets. Under these circumstances the laws of supply and demand were unlikely to prove very effective. It was therefore decided that grain would be "purchased and laid in by both the Government of India and by the Local Government for the public works under their charge respectively."[2] However, reliance was to be placed upon the free operation of trade to meet the food

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 28 Oct. 1873, Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 2, (Dec.).

[2]Resolution, Gov.-Gen., 7 Nov. 1873, ibid., No. 10, (Dec.).

requirements of the general population. A firm believer in laissez-faire, Northbrook was opposed to Government interference "with trade in grain, either by prohibiting the exportation ... or by undertaking the general purchase and distribution of it through large tracts of country, or by regulating ... the prices of it in the markets."[1] To help stimulate private trade the railway companies were immediately instructed to reduce by one-half the freight rates on grain travelling towards the threatened districts. The cost of this reduction was to be borne by the Government. A similar measure had been tried with beneficial results in the previous famine. The Government also endorsed a number of other minor measures which had been followed on former occasions. It promised to advance money to zamindars to make agricultural improvements, to purchase seed-grain, or to feed the ryots on their estates, and it allocated £50,000 to promote emigration to Assam and Burma. If, despite all these measures, distress became severe, the Government pledged its assistance in the formation of a central committee and of local committees to provide gratuitous relief. To assure the public that every effort was being made to meet the scarcity, Northbrook published a resolution on 7 November describing the Government's general policy for dealing with the famine.

---

[1] Ibid.

Although no previous administration had responded to the threat of famine so promptly or with such a comprehensive programme, there were immediate demands for more decisive action. The Government's large measure of reliance on free trade principles and particularly its refusal to supplement the province's food supply by prohibiting exports aroused severe criticism. In recent years India -- including British Burma -- had been exporting more than a million tons of rice.[1] If exports were prevented there would be ample food to meet a crop shortage in a limited area of the country. Campbell, who had taken an alarming view of the prospects from the beginning, had been among the first to make this proposal. In his letter informing the Indian Government of the impending scarcity he had suggested that "the export of rice ... from the Indian dominions should be stopped."[2] When Northbrook announced his refusal to do this in the resolution of 7 November, Campbell, who was never one to shun controversy, stepped up pressure for the prohibition of exports. He urged that if the Government declined to interfere with "the great export of 700,000 tons of rice which goes yearly

---

[1]The existence, under free market conditions, of this substantial export trade would seem to suggest that there is little foundation for Bhatia's view [Indian Famines, p. 32] that the country did not produce an agricultural surplus at that time.

[2]Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 23 Oct. 1873, Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 1, (Dec.).

from British Burma" it should at least close the ports of Bengal from which about 400,000 tons of grain were shipped in normal years.[1] He stated that despite rising prices 94,000 maunds[2] of rice had been shipped from Calcutta during the first week of November and requested that no food should be allowed to leave the province after the end of the month. Campbell's recommendations soon became public and strengthened the agitation for the prevention of exports which had already been gaining momentum in Indian newspapers. Towards the end of November Northbrook admitted that "the whole Native Press and some of the English papers are urgent for the prohibition of the export of food-grains."[3] One of the strongest appeals to the Government to stop exports came from the British Indian Association. It acknowledged that such interference with trade would be a serious matter, but gave its balanced opinion in favour of prohibition. The Association wrote:

> The requirements of foreign communities, the obligations of merchants, the advantages to be derived by particular sections of the people of this country by sales at high prices to foreigners, are matters which should not be looked at lightly; but in a crisis like the present, in which the lives of millions are at stake, they must be allowed to be outweighted.[4]

---

[1] Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 7 Nov. 1873, ibid., No. 12, (Dec.).

[2] A maund equals 84 lbs.

[3] N. to Argyll, 27 Nov. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.

[4] B.I.A. to Bengal Govt., 21 Nov. 1873, Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 75, (Dec.).

The demand for preventing exports was not confined to India. In Britain, the Times came out strongly in favour of the prohibition of exports. It was influenced to a large extent by the alarmist views of its correspondent in India, Dr. George Smith, who was advocating more decisive Government action in the columns of his own newspaper, the Friend of India. In a leading article of 27 November the Times wrote:

> We ... view with apprehension the resolution, to which the Indian Government still adheres, of permitting the export of grain. ... The rules of Political Economy are the laws of exchange under ordinary circumstances; and the circumstances of a central Government charged at three months' notice with the support of the population of a large State are not ordinary. Under such circumstances, a Government should leave nothing to chance, and if ... it can lay its hands beforehand on the necessary grain, it should not hesitate to do so.

It expressed similar views in subsequent editorials.

Despite the widespread demand for prohibiting exports, Northbrook, supported by his entire Council, adhered to his original policy. He believed that there was no justification for such an extreme measure as the interference with the whole grain export trade of India merely because of the deficiency of one crop in part of Bengal. In his opinion the only practical question was whether exports from that province alone should be stopped. The bulk of Bengal rice was exported to other ports of British India, including Ceylon, and to the West Indies, Mauritius, and other colonies where the consumers were mainly Indian

emigrants.[1] In Northbrook's view "it would have been very unwise to have interfered with inter-portal trade and ... wrong, at any rate without considerable notice, to have stopped the main supply of the usual food of Bengal coolies in the Colonies."[2] Besides causing immediate hardship to the province's best customers, Northbrook feared that the prevention of exports would have inflicted serious long term damage to Bengal's overseas trade. Its customers, forced to buy all their grain elsewhere, might not return to the Bengal market. "Our customers may submit to very high prices," Northbrook wrote, "but if they find that on the first signs of serious scarcity we close our ports, they will feel no security in future, and try other countries, where trade is governed by stable principles, and is not subject to the sudden interference of the Executive Council."[3] He was anxious to avoid "striking a fatal blow at an export trade in food-grains" partly because of its "great importance as regards the general financial position of India."[4] However, there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that Northbrook's decision was specifically influenced -- as Dr. Bhatia claims the Government always was[5] -- by a desire

---

[1]Minute, N., Jan. 1874, ibid., No. 311, (Jan.).
[2]Ibid.
[3]N. to Argyll, 27 Nov. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.
[4]Ibid.
[5]Famines in India, pp. 109-10.

to finance a growth in the import trade or to provide for the payment of 'home charges'. Instead, it was probably a result of his belief, as a Liberal free-trader, that the prosperity of any country depended to a large extent upon a flourishing external trade.

Northbrook realized that the prohibition of exports would have enhanced public confidence in the sufficiency of food supplies, but he believed that this would have been a false confidence. He wrote:

> One of the greatest safeguards against a famine in India, as in every country, lies in the diminution of consumption which naturally results from the rise of prices which the anticipation of scarcity occasions; and I can conceive no interference by Government more unwise than the reduction of prices below their natural level at the beginning of a period of scarcity. ... The addition that would have been made to the general supplies of the country would ... have been soon absorbed by the increase of consumption which would have been the result of an undue lowering of prices.[1]

Even if the trade were left completely free, the rise in prices was bound to keep the exports well below average. Former experience had shown this to be true and as soon as prices moved upward in 1873 the same trend occurred. The exports from Calcutta in October and November of that year were only 17,500 tons compared with 46,275 tons in 1872.[2] Northbrook was therefore confident that even without interfering with trade much of the grain normally exported would remain in the province.

---

[1]Minute, N., Jan. 1874, loc. cit.
[2]N. to Argyll, 27 Nov. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.

Northbrook would undoubtedly have prohibited exports had that been the only means of averting widespread starvation. But in his opinion there was a much less disruptive method of providing food to meet the deficiency in Bengal -- namely by importing food from British Burma or other parts of India where the crops were successful. From the beginning Northbrook had considered that it was the Government's duty to supplement private trade wherever it was unlikely to prove effective. It was for this reason that he had given a pledge in the resolution of 7 November that the Government would supply food for all those employed upon imperial and local relief works. Northbrook also decided, though this was not stated in the resolution, that the Government would secure the food for those requiring gratuitous relief.

At the outset it was impossible to foretell how serious the famine would be or how much grain the Government would need to import. Because of the permanent settlement in Bengal local officials had little knowledge of the extent of the various crops even in ordinary years. There was uncertainty over the extent of the failure of the autumn rice crop and the proportion which this crop formed of the annual food output. Nor was it known how far the sowing for the spring crops had gone ahead as usual. A decision on the amount of grain which the Government should purchase could not be long deferred however without

involving considerable risk. The first estimate was formed in November when Northbrook, in conjunction with Temple and S.C. Bayley, the Commissioner of Patna, concluded that 2.5 million people, or 10 percent of the entire population of the worst districts, would require some form of Government assistance for a period of seven months.[1] On the basis of a ration of one pound of grain a day, which was generally agreed to be adequate, the Government would need to secure nearly 250,000 tons. Northbrook, who visited much of the drought-stricken area during November and December and discussed the prospects with local officials and members of the Indian and European commercial community, believed the estimate was safe. "[It] very much exceeds," he wrote, "the proportion of the population which has ever come upon the hands of the Government in former times."[2] Since average or bumper crops were expected in eastern Bengal, Orissa, and upper India generally and the districts affected by drought were mostly within manageable distance of railways or rivers, Northbrook was confident that private trade would largely meet the food requirements of the general population.

Although Northbrook did not think there was any immediate need for the Government to purchase its full

---

[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid.

estimated requirement, both he and Campbell began placing orders for grain early in November. To avoid interference with market conditions the purchases were made through private traders and the total amount of the orders was kept secret. In general the orders were placed in areas remote from the famine districts leaving the local markets to private traders most of whom lacked the resources or the initiative to import grain from long distances. The central Government ordered principally from British Burma where supplies of rice were abundant and prices moderate. By the end of November the Bengal Government had arranged for 20,000 tons while Northbrook, who had assumed direct charge of all Government of India purchases, had ordered 80,000 tons.[1] Northbrook was sure that 100,000 tons was ample for the time being and decided to defer further orders until it was possible "to gauge somewhat more accurately the probable demand upon us."[2] Few people were coming to the relief works which had been opened and there would be no difficulty in securing additional supplies from British Burma where 800,000 tons of rice was expected to be available for export during the coming year.

However, Northbrook was soon obliged to double his purchases as a result of the alarmist views which were

---

[1] N. to Temple, 3 Dec. 1873, ibid., vol. 14.
[2] N. to Argyll, 27 Nov. 1873, ibid., vol. 9.

prevalent in India and Britain. Most newspapers in India took a far more serious view of the prospects than the Government. Among the Anglo-Indian newspapers the Friend of India and the Indian Economist, which was edited by Robert Knight, an assistant secretary to the Bengal Government, maintained that the central Government was seriously underestimating the danger and taking insufficient precautions.[1] The Bengalee estimated the population "likely to suffer directly at 36 millions"[2] in contrast to the official prediction of 25 million. The British Indian Association considered the danger to be far greater still. "In the present year," it maintained, "nearly the whole of Bengal, Behar, and Chota Nagpur has suffered from drought, covering an area of 180,857 square miles, and containing a population of nearly 59 millions."[3] It admitted that "the task of feeding 60 millions of people" might well "appal the stoutest heart" and urged the Government to lose no time in securing adequate supplies of grain. The alarmist sentiments being expressed in India were readily echoed in the Times, which from the first adopted a crusading attitude towards the famine.[4]

---

[1] Editorials, 21 and 29 Nov. 1873 respectively.
[2] Quoted in Times, 3 Dec. 1873.
[3] B.I.A. to Bengal Govt., 21 Nov. 1873, Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 75, (Dec.).
[4] Between 25 Oct. 1873 and 31 Mar. of the following year it devoted an average of at least one leading article a week to the famine.

After learning that the British Indian Association expected that 60 million people would be affected by the famine, it maintained that the Indian Government's estimate was "only guess work".[1] It warned that a week's delay in taking precautions could lead to the death of millions and that the responsibility for any failure would rest squarely upon Northbrook and the Secretary of State.[2]

The vigorous campaign by the Times for decisive Government action undoubtedly had a considerable influence upon Argyll and the Cabinet. Although there was unanimous support for Northbrook's decision to secure the necessary food supplies by importing grain rather than prohibiting exports, the Cabinet believed that he should immediately increase his purchases beyond the 100,000 tons already ordered. "We are anxious," Argyll telegraphed to Northbrook on 29 November, "that you should purchase at once in India, Burma, and Siam as much rice as will cover the worst estimate of famine."[3] Only a few days earlier Argyll had advised him to order grain from America,[4] but Northbrook had declined to do so because the necessity was "very doubtful, and the expenditure might be excessive."[5] However, Northbrook interpreted the telegram of 29 November

---

[1]Editorial, 27 Nov. 1873.
[2]Editorials, 20 Nov. and 3 Dec. 1873.
[3]N.P., vol. 10.
[4]Telegram, 23 Nov. 1873, ibid.
[5]Telegram, 24 Nov. 1873, ibid.

as a Cabinet instruction to "purchase enough to meet our outside liability" -- 250,000 tons.[1] In mid-December Argyll again recommended an increase in purchases. He telegraphed:

> The risk ... of delay in purchasing larger stores of food seems very great. I share the general impression that your purchases ... should be larger. It is better to run no risk and to err on the safe side.[2]

As a result of this telegram Northbrook decided to buy about 100,000 tons more than the total estimated requirement of 250,000 tons. This would form a reserve in case the famine became more severe than the Government anticipated. Northbrook immediately instructed Ashley Eden, the Chief Commissioner of British Burma, to place orders there for the required grain. To avoid forcing up market prices, absolute secrecy was maintained over the Government's purchases and only Temple, Evelyn Baring, and Eden knew how much grain Northbrook was ordering.[3] By the end of January arrangements were completed for securing a total of more than 340,000 tons of grain.[4] The home Government was at last satisfied with the adequacy of the precautions and wrote a despatch emphatically upholding

---

[1] N. to Temple, 3 Dec. 1873, ibid., vol. 14.
[2] Telegram, 18 Dec. 1873, ibid., vol. 10.
[3] N. to Argyll, 23 Jan. 1874, ibid., vol. 9.
[4] This amount included the 100,000 tons ordered by the end of November. About 50,000 tons of the total was ordered by the Bengal Government.

Northbrook's entire famine policy.[1]

However, as famine conditions began to set in during February, Northbrook again increased the orders for grain, this time largely upon the recommendation of Temple. At the end of January Temple had been appointed to supervise famine operations in the affected districts. One of his principal duties was to frame, in communication with local officers, careful estimates of the number of persons in each district likely to need relief and of the quantity of grain required. Temple's estimate of the total number of people who would require assistance closely matched that of November, but he decided that to be on the safe side it would be advisable to provide for a daily personal allowance of one and one-half pounds of grain instead of one pound. This was certainly a generous allowance and in recommending it Temple was probably influenced by the pressure of the public and the British Government for greater precautions. Many local officials thought one pound a day sufficient and Northbrook shared that view. "I had half a seer [one pound] of common ballam cooked to-day, to see how much it is," he wrote to Temple, "and I shall be much surprised if our original calculation ... is not ample ..."[2] But, like Temple, he and the rest of

---

[1] S.S. to Indian Govt., 23 Jan. 1874, Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 219, (Jan.).

[2] N. to Temple, 13 Feb. 1874, N.P., vol. 15.

the Council were anxious to avoid any risk and decided it would be "safer to adopt the higher estimate", according to which a total of 338,000 tons of grain would be required.[1] Since the total orders at that time amounted to only 340,000 tons, the Bengal Government strongly recommended that a further large reserve of grain should be provided.[2] At the same time Lord Salisbury, who had just become Secretary of State, urged further buying. Immediately upon taking office he telegraphed Northbrook to "continue, at whatever cost, to make fullest provision for importing grain."[3] Largely as a result of these recommendations, Northbrook ordered another 140,000 tons of grain as a precautionary measure. By early March the total Government grain purchased or on order was 480,000 tons.

Although this amount was well in excess of the estimated requirement and was more than ten times as much as had been provided by the Government during any previous famine, Salisbury wanted still larger purchases. He had been Secretary of State at the outbreak of the Orissa famine and felt much responsibility for the failure on that occasion.[4] As a result he was particularly anxious

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 20 Mar. 1874, Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 273, (Mar.).
[2]Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 27 Feb. 1874, ibid., No. 124, (Mar.).
[3]Telegram, 24 Feb. 1874, N.P., vol. 11.
[4]Salisbury to N., 27 Jan. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

to avert another tragedy. He was undoubtedly influenced too by the continuing demands of the Times for greater measures. Unlike most Indian newspapers, which abated their criticism after the Government announced in early February that it had purchased 340,000 tons of grain, the Times kept on crusading. In a leading article on 7 March, for example, it expressed the hope that Salisbury would show more determination than Argyll, whom it condemned for not closing the ports and not forcing the Government to concentrate on the problem of transporting the grain. "But, the Secretary of State for India," the Times continued,

> still has it in his power to infuse new vigour into the official mind with respect to the Famine. Lord Northbrook's 420,000[1] tons of rice ought to be supplemented largely and without delay. ... Lord Salisbury will win the gratitude and respect of the nation if the groundwork of his policy be the single determination that, so far as human effort can prevent it, our people shall not die for want of food.

Three days after the appearance of this editorial Salisbury telegraphed to Northbrook instructing him to order up to 200,000 tons more of grain from Burma.[2] Although Salisbury promised to "take the responsibility of waste arising from such margin",[3] Northbrook was opposed to further purchases.[4] Already the Government had secured as much grain as could be sent up-country from Calcutta

---

[1]The full extent of Northbrook's orders were not known to the public at that time.

[2]Telegram, 10 Mar. 1874, N.P., vol. 10.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Telegrams, N. to Salisbury, 12 and 13 Mar. 1874, ibid.

before the beginning of the summer monsoon and Northbrook was convinced that it would be a mistake to order more grain until the outcome of that monsoon were known. The winter rains in Bengal had been nearly average and the spring crops promised to be fairly successful. If the rainfall for the remainder of the year were normal the province would soon recover from the shortage of the 1873 rice crop. But even if the monsoon failed the Government had enough food to provide for well over 10 percent of the drought-stricken population until the end of September. Northbrook was therefore determined to defer further buying until events showed it to be necessary. Salisbury accepted his conclusion though with great reluctance. "I am still uneasy about the extent of your supplies," he telegraphed on 13 March.[1] In a despatch a few days later he warned the Indian Government that "if any unforeseen.... difficulties were to occur [it] ... might be involved in embarrassment of the gravest character" and advised it "to take early measures for securing ... a very ample margin to meet contingencies, the exact nature of which it is impossible to foresee, but which, in an emergency of this magnitude, are ... likely to occur."[2] However, Northbrook and his Council remained convinced that plenty of grain

---

[1] N.P., vol. 10.

[2] S.S. to Indian Govt., 19 Mar. 1874, Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 320, (Apr.).

had been ordered and no additional increases were made. After receiving an official letter in which the reasons for this decision were fully explained[1] Salisbury exerted no further pressure for additional purchases.

Having purchased the grain the Government was obliged to assume responsibility for transporting it to the famine districts and distributing it for storage in centres accessible to the people. Few operations connected with the famine required more careful planning or more efficient execution than this. Demands for Government assistance were expected to be heavy from the latter part of February, and since transport would be practically impossible after the outbreak of the summer monsoon the 340,000 tons of grain allocated to the famine districts had to be delivered before that time. Transporting such a large quantity of grain up-country from Calcutta seriously taxed the capacity of the two railway lines. During the first months of 1874, the East Indian Railway, the main trunk line to the north-west, was unable to deliver the 2,000 tons of grain a day which the Government wished to send. It was only after much pressure from Northbrook and with great difficulty that it eventually increased its daily carrying capacity to over 2,500 tons.[2]

---

[1] Indian Govt. to S.S., 24 Apr. 1874, ibid., No. 321, (Apr.).

[2] Indian Govt. to S.S., 20 Mar. 1874, ibid., No. 272, (Mar.).

The problem of distributing the grain throughout the famine districts was far more formidable still. The drought had been most severe north of the Ganges where there were no railways and where river communications were practically impossible during the dry season. Darbhanga, in the centre of the area hardest hit by the famine, was nearly fifty miles north of the nearest railway line on the south bank of the Ganges. Reliance could only be placed on bullock transport as long as adequate supplies of fodder were available. From the first Northbrook had realized the seriousness of this problem and had urged the Bengal Government to give particular attention to it.[1] However, his advice was not followed and, when a meeting of leading officials of both Governments was held at Government House early in January to discuss developments, Campbell was unable to give a reliable estimate of the facilities available for local transport. Since the success of the entire relief operations depended mainly upon the adequacy of local transport, Northbrook was extremely disturbed to find that arrangements were so incomplete. He warned that the time was fast approaching "when the whole of the transport service must be thoroughly well organized" and advised that local officials "should

---

[1]Resolution, Gov.-Gen., 7 Nov. 1873, and Indian Govt. to Bengal Govt., 13 Nov. 1873, ibid., Nos. 10 and 117, (Dec.).

be called upon to state distinctly what their powers of transport were, not only for the present but for the next four or five months."[1] The question of building a tramway north of the Ganges was also discussed but Campbell did not think it was necessary and the project was dropped. As a result of this meeting the Bengal Government ordered its local officers to speed up transport arrangements.

However, it was only after Temple went to the famine districts at the end of January to supervise operations that an efficient system of local transport was established. Before his arrival officials had tried to obtain carts directly from the ryots but with unfortunate results. "The police turned the order into an engine of small oppression," Temple wrote, "and the cart-owners began to take the wheels off their carts to avoid seizure!"[2] Consequently, Temple adopted the far more expensive, but also more successful, method of contracting for carriage with the indigo planters, many of whom undoubtedly made a great profit.[3] Within a few months 100,000 carts and some 230,000 animals were being employed in local transport.[4] By mid-March supplies were moving into northern Bihar at the rate of 30,000 maunds per day. But reliance was not

---

[1]Report of Conference at Government House, 8 Jan. 1874, ibid., No. 127, (Jan.).

[2]Temple to N., 3 Feb. 1874, N.P., vol. 15.

[3]Indian Famine Commission Report (1880), vol. 2, p. 111.

[4]Minute, Temple, 31 Oct. 1874, Temple P., vol. 127.

placed on bullock transport alone. Shortly after going to the famine tract Temple had recommended the building of a light railway from the north bank of the Ganges to Darbhanga. This would not only greatly increase existing carrying capacity but would prevent a breakdown in transport in case heavy mortality occurred among the draught animals as the dry season advanced. The Government, which had earlier given up the idea of constructing such a railway line, now sanctioned the project. Construction was undertaken with great haste and as a result proved considerably more expensive than it might otherwise have been.[1] The line was completed by the middle of April and shortly afterward was carrying about 800 tons of grain a day to Darbhanga. From that time there was more than sufficient local carriage to distribute the daily amount of grain brought up-country by the trunk railways. Government grain, which had never before been provided on such a massive scale, was at last being efficiently distributed even though at considerable expense.

Before the transport and distributing operations were completed the relief programme had begun in earnest. The imperial public works projects had started in December, but, largely because of the reluctance of the ryots and other labourers to leave home during a critical period,

---

[1] Indian Famine Commission Report (1880), loc. cit.

the total number employed upon them had reached only 35,000 by the end of January. The numbers increased as the famine became more severe but never reached the Government's desired complement. Meanwhile, the demand for employment upon local relief works, which had at first been slight, rose sharply during February and March[1] as the effect of the failure of the winter rice crop began to be severely felt. Many district officials, preoccupied with the problem of getting grain to the local depots, had neglected their instructions to make advance plans for relief work and were unprepared for the sudden great demand for employment. This was especially true in Tirhut, the district hardest hit by the famine. Early in March, a correspondent of the London Daily News, who was touring the northern part of the district, wrote to Evelyn Baring:

> Famine is on you and you are not ready; people in a dying state by scores; I have seen famine-dead; only 2 [relief] circles out of 13 set going. 24,000 people on Durbhunga Road not properly paid.[2]

This news caused Northbrook and Campbell much anxiety and it was decided that the latter should go at once to Tirhut to check up on the situation and to remedy any defects in relief organization. Although only one or two deaths had occurred from starvation, Campbell found that there was

---

[1]The figures for employment upon local relief works were 231,000 and 606,000 respectively, compared with 78,000 for January.

[2]Quoted in N. to Temple, 6 Mar. 1874, N.P., vol. 15.

serious distress among the poorer classes, thousands of whom were flocking for employment to the relief works which had been opened.[1] On one section of the Bahera road alone more than 50,000 people had gathered and the number was still increasing. Since it was practically impossible to control such large numbers and the danger of an epidemic was great, Campbell instructed the local officers to draft most of these people back to the villages. There the women could be engaged in spinning and weaving and those men who had been weakened by under-nourishment could do some form of light work. Officials had much difficulty in sorting out the able-bodied from those incapable of real work, but during the next few weeks there was a steady movement of the latter group to the villages. From the middle of April about half the total number of people on local relief works were employed on village projects. After that there were no further serious shortcomings in organization and during the following month, when the demand for work reached its highest peak, over 1.61 million people were employed on local relief works -- a far greater number than had been employed in any previous famine.

The only other serious difficulty connected with the local relief programme arose over the method of paying

---

[1]Campbell to N., 10 and 15 Mar. 1874, ibid.

those employed. During his inspection tour of Tirhut Campbell had observed that even the able-bodied were doing little effective work. In the hope of remedying this he authorized the introduction of a piece-work system, whereby labourers would be paid on the basis of work performed instead of receiving a fixed daily wage. When this system was introduced in Tirhut about 200,000 workers left the roads in protest.[1] A few days later only 15,000 had returned. About 75,000 had gone over to village works, but the rest were unaccounted for. Temple, who was in the district at the time, was worried about the fate of this latter group. To induce them back, he reintroduced the set daily wage, based at a subsistence level of around 2 annas. He also retained the piece-work system but offered a higher rate of pay than previously. Under the new arrangement it was possible, by working steadily, to earn considerably more than on a daily wage basis. As a result the piece-work system proved far more popular than before and the great majority of the able-bodied soon chose to be employed in this way.[2] During the latter stage of the famine the system was in successful operation in all districts and, although it was more expensive than the traditional system of a set daily wage, it undoubtedly

---

[1]Temple to N., 22 Apr. 1874, ibid. Temple later estimated the number at 350,000.

[2]Minute, Temple, 31 Oct. 1874, Temple P., vol. 127.

resulted in more real work being achieved. For this reason the piece-work system, which had never been successfully applied before, was widely adopted in most subsequent famines.

As in previous famines the administration of gratuitous relief went hand in hand with the programme of relief works. Since deaths from starvation were likely to occur first among those unable or unwilling to work, Northbrook had been anxious from the beginning to ensure the efficient organization of gratuitous relief and had advised Campbell to instruct local officials to organize relief committees -- on which Indians were to be included -- in plenty of time and in sufficient numbers to meet every need. However, there was little immediate demand for this form of relief and up to the early part of 1874 few arrangements had been made for its future distribution. Northbrook was dismayed by the lack of preparation. At a special meeting with members of the Bengal Government on 8 January he criticized local officials for slackness in carrying out their orders and warned that it might be difficult to form local committees in time to avert suffering.[1] Campbell agreed that further delay might be dangerous and ordered district officers to give immediate attention to the matter.[2] At

---

[1]Report of Conference at Government House, 8 Jan. 1874, Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 127, (Jan.).

[2]Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 14 Jan. 1874, ibid., No. 120, (Jan.).

Northbrook's request the Bengal Government also prepared plans for a Central Relief Committee which was to be formed as soon as the need for charitable relief became general. This Committee was established on 4 February at a meeting in Calcutta attended by Northbrook, Campbell, other high ranking officials, and prominent members of the public both Indian and European.[1] About fifty members, nearly half of whom were Indians, were selected to form the Central Committee. The Committee, which was to act in close conjunction with and to be under the immediate supervision of the Bengal Government, selected an eleven-man executive, among them four Indians. The meeting marked the beginning of an appeal to the public of India and Britain for funds to assist in the provision of gratuitous relief which was required on an increasingly large scale as the famine intensified.

Besides ensuring that plans for the administration of gratuitous relief were formulated in plenty of time, the Government also assumed a much greater responsibility for this form of relief than ever before. At the outset Northbrook had promised that the Government would not only match public contributions to the charitable relief funds but exceed them if necessary. In India and Britain the public responded liberally to the appeal for money

---

[1]Report of Meeting in Town Hall, 4 Feb. 1874, ibid., No. 138, (Feb.).

and some Rs.14,00,000 was collected in each country. Although the total public subscriptions (Rs.28,26,690) were far higher than ever before, the Government honoured its promise to provide an equal amount and contributed Rs.31,70,000 to the funds of the Central Committee. Moreover, when it became clear during the latter part of February that famine would be particularly severe in seven districts of Bihar, the Government assumed full responsibility for the administration of gratuitous relief there and undertook to pay the cost of these operations.[1] Although the Central Committee would undoubtedly have been unable to meet the full cost of relief in these districts, the Government was more generous than necessary. By mid-May, when less than Rs.18,00,000 had been collected, the Chairman of the Central Committee considered that it had more than enough money and wished to announce that no further subscriptions were required.[2] However, Temple, anxious that no effort should be spared to avert suffering, disagreed with this view and it was decided that the Committee should enlarge the scope of its relief operations in the districts under its jurisdiction.[3]

One of the main difficulties connected with gratuitous

---

[1]N. to Temple, 22 Feb. 1874, N.P., vol. 15. Hitherto responsibility had been shared between the Government and the Central Committee.

[2]N. to Salisbury, 8 May 1874, ibid., vol. 11.

[3]N. to Salisbury, 15 May 1874, ibid.

relief lay in establishing a system which provided prompt assistance to anybody in real need, but prevented those who were not from abusing public generosity. The usual method in the past had been to impose a labour test upon applicants for charitable relief. All those who were willing to do a little light work in return for relief were considered to be in genuine need. As a further check against abuse relief had generally been given in the form of cooked food. After the famine of 1860 the majority of the recipients of charitable relief had also been obliged to reside in poorhouses. Experience had shown, however, that many Indians preferred death to residence in a poorhouse and consequently Northbrook, Campbell, and other leading officials agreed that on this occasion poorhouses should only be established where they were needed to provide for homeless people. There was general agreement, too, that the objective of saving all life would not be achieved if a labour test were stringently applied in those areas where famine was particularly severe. Many women, for example, would be unlikely to submit to such a test. Consequently, the local relief committees were instructed not to insist upon the invariable application of a labour test.[1] Nevertheless, reports circulated in Britain that all recipients of gratuitous relief were

---

[1]Instructions to relief committees, [24 Jan. 1874], Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 209, (Jan.).

being forced to work. Argyll, who was still in office, did not believe these reports, but he warned Northbrook that the press was "screaming about ... heroic measures" and that Disraeli had publicly expressed the fear that the Indian Government was "enforcing too strictly a labor test, even on classes incapable of labor, and on women."[1] The reports were in fact without foundation. But "to avoid any possibility of misapprehension", Northbrook wrote officially to the Bengal Government "forbidding" the rigid application of labour tests.[2] In a resolution a few weeks later the Indian Government clearly explained the principles on which gratuitous relief was to be administered. It declared:

> The Government had not prescribed the invariable use of any test, either by labor or by the distribution of cooked food, [to which many Indians objected on the grounds of caste] for ... determining who are fit objects for relief. Such tests are desirable and necessary under certain circumstances. It is right that able-bodied men, accustomed to labor, should, as a general rule, be required to work in return for the food or money supplied to them. It is desirable that light work should be found for others where this can be arranged profitably and without obliging large numbers of people to leave their homes. In dealing with certain classes of distress, especially in towns, the issue of relief cooked food may be useful as a test. But stringent tests are inapplicable to those limited tracts of country where, owing to the great failure of the crops and the absence of private trade, the Government have ... assumed the task of importing grain for sale and distribution to the people.

---

[1] Argyll to N., 13 Feb. 1874, N.P., vol. 9; and Telegram, 11 Feb. 1874, ibid., vol. 10.

[2] Telegram, N. to Argyll, 14 Feb. 1874, ibid.

> In such tracts the difficulty will not be to prevent undeserving applicants from being relieved, but to ensure that sufficient supplies reach those who require them.[1]

In the latter districts, the Government relied not upon tests but upon "the local knowledge of the persons entrusted with the distribution of relief to prevent abuses."[2]

The success of this system depended upon the organization of a vast network of sub-committees to look after the needs of every village. The task was an immense one for which local officials had little experience since the system had not been used before except for a brief period during the Orissa famine. Not surprisingly, serious difficulties were experienced at first particularly in Tirhut where officials were too slow in organizing committees and made the mistake of trying to supervise all the relief operations themselves. As a result disaster was narrowly averted. Campbell, who, as already noted, hastened to the area to speed up relief operations, strongly criticized local officials for their shortcomings. He wrote to Northbrook:

> The cause of the failure of relief here ... is the apparent inability of the local officers to make any use whatever of indigenous agency and their entire reliance is on paid establishments got from outside.[3]

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 6 Mar. 1874, Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 109, (Mar.).

[2]Indian Govt. to Bengal Govt., 13 Feb. 1874, ibid., No. 137, (Feb.).

[3]Several hundred officers had been brought in from other parts of India to aid in the famine operations.

> ... There is practically no Committee here. ... In this great town of 50,000 inhabitants [Darbhanga] not a single native assists our operations in any way, and one of the best of the young civilians is employed to give house to house food to 160 ordinary paupers in the town.[1]

Northbrook was as disturbed as Campbell to find that officials had shown "so much want of judgement", and maintained that any civilian who "considers he can make no use of natives in the relief of distress ... is not in his right place."[2] Under Campbell's direction organization was improved and Indians were widely associated in distributing relief. Within a few weeks the village relief system was working fairly efficiently. Following a visit to Darbhanga late in March, the Commissioner of the division wrote:

> In riding through the worst parts, and in [sic] circuit of 20 miles, I did not find a person ... uncared for. Lists of all persons on charity have been made out. Grain has been placed in the hands of chief ryots, and in the scores of villages where I went [sic] most wretched are being fed at their homes by headmen.[3]

The near disaster in Tirhut served as a warning to other local officials. By mid-April, when the demand for gratuitous relief had become fairly general, dozens of committees, each responsible for between fifty and one hundred villages, had been organized. Most officials

---

[1]Campbell to N., 10 Mar. 1874, N.P., vol. 15.
[2]N. to Campbell, 13 Mar. 1874, ibid.
[3]Quoted in Telegram, N. to Salisbury, 4 Apr. 1874, ibid., vol. 10.

applied the relief regulations in the liberal spirit which the Government desired. They not only provided assistance to most people who applied for it, but sought out people in the villages who were in need but had not requested relief. It was impossible, however, for officials to be personally familiar with the needs of every applicant and some abuse undoubtedly occurred. This was clear from the size of the relief figures, for an average of 450,000 people received gratuitous assistance for a period of six months compared with the previous record of 55,000. While it was true that relief had only been given on a very inadequate scale in the past, it was probable that not all those relieved on this occasion were in absolute distress. But starvation was averted and the system was far better suited to Indian conditions than the rigid application of tests. As a result the policy of village inspection and relief adopted by Northbrook's Government was widely followed during subsequent famines.

In addition to its comprehensive programme of relief works and gratuitous assistance, two other measures adopted by the Government to avert distress assumed great importance during the latter stages of the famine. These were the advancement of money or grain to cultivators and the sale of grain to the public. In the past the Government had granted loans to zamindars to make agricultural improvements or to buy grain and as a result of that

experience Northbrook had declared at the outset that this policy would be followed once again.[1] Northbrook was especially in favour of this type of assistance since it encouraged a spirit of independence rather than outright reliance on the Government. He also considered it well suited to Indian conditions where many landholders might require assistance to restore their fields to full cultivation but would be too proud to work on relief projects or to seek public charity. At first, however, few zamindars showed an interest in receiving loans. Consequently the Government relaxed the terms on which money might be advanced.[2] Moreover, as the time of the summer monsoon approached and it became clear that the Government had stored far more grain than would be required by those engaged on relief works and in receipt of charitable assistance, local officials were permitted to advance grain to any cultivator who required it and who could give reasonable security for repayment. Terms of repayment were light and large numbers of cultivators soon began borrowing grain. Altogether the Government advanced nearly 108,000 tons of grain to an estimated 400,000 cultivators. The demand for money loans also increased following the relaxation in the terms on which they could

---

[1] See above, p. 142

[2] Indian Famine Commission Report (1880), vol. 2, pp. 140-41.

be advanced and an unprecedented total of Rs.35,00,000 was lent to planters, zamindars, and traders. Although there was much scepticism at the time over the recovery of these advances, 85 percent of the total value of the grain and cash loans was repaid in subsequent years[1] and the Government's policy of advancing money and grain on liberal terms was largely vindicated.

Whereas the Government had been committed from the start to the policy of granting loans and only increased the scope of this measure as the famine developed, some months elapsed before it even considered selling grain to the public. The first suggestion that the Government should sell its grain whenever a shortage occurred in the local markets was made by the relief commissioner of Rajshahi.[2] Much as Northbrook disliked such extensive Government involvement in commercial activity, he agreed that "in special limited districts, where ... private trade might be found not to bring in supplies, Government might ... properly sell grain at its price at the nearest large grain mart ... as was done in the Irish famine."[3] But this was to be done only as a last resort after it was certain that the supplies of private traders were

---

[1]Ibid., p. 142.

[2]Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 3 Jan. 1874, Famine Proc., vol. 685, No. 80, (Jan.).

[3]Report of Conference at Government House, 8 Jan. 1874, ibid., No. 127, (Jan.).

completely exhausted. This soon happened in the districts remote from the main lines of communication and in April Northbrook advised Temple not to hesitate to sell grain wherever it was needed.[1] Within a month Government grain was being sold in about one-third of the total famine area. Most of it was sold to local dealers on condition that they retailed it at a fixed rate to the public. This rate was based on that prevailing in the markets near the Ganges and varied between 10 and 12 seers per rupee -- a rate considerably lower than that which generally prevailed in time of severe famine. In effect, therefore, the price of grain in the most distressed districts was controlled by the Government. In contrast to other famines of the century, in none of which the Government intervened to such an extent, prices never reached exorbitant heights. Altogether more than 118,000 tons of grain were sold from the Government stores and it was estimated that it provided assistance to about 700,000 people.[2] This was therefore one of the most important means of counteracting the famine.

One measure which the Government had hoped would play a useful part in easing distress, but which met with little success, was the emigration programme. The tea

---

[1] N. to Temple, 24 Apr. 1874, N.P., vol. 15.

[2] Indian Famine Commission Report (1880), vol. 2, p. 145.

planters of Assam did not want additional labourers at that time and the scheme to encourage emigration to that province was abandoned.[1] In fact few people were prepared to leave their ancestral homes and, despite Government subsidies, only 5,500 people emigrated to British Burma.

The net effect of the Government's energetic, comprehensive, and generous measures was that for the first time on record the threat of serious famine was successfully averted. The anxiously awaited summer monsoon of 1874 proved favourable, the demand for government assistance decreased steadily from July onward, and at the end of September the relief operations were brought to a conclusion. The final mortality figures showed that, in contrast to the thousands of people who had died during previous famines, less than twenty-five deaths occurred on this occasion.[2] This achievement was truly spectacular considering that, according to the final calculations, the drought had been severe over an area of about 40,000 square miles, containing a population of nearly 18 million people. Never before had the Government utilized its resources so effectively to meet a peace time crisis; never had the bureaucratic structure functioned more effectively. However, success was only achieved at a heavy financial cost. The Indian Government spent a

---

[1] Ibid., p. 143.
[2] Ibid., p. 146.

total of £6.59 million on the famine.[1] Such a large expenditure on famine was completely unprecedented. The previous record spending had been on the Orissa famine which had cost the Government £1.28 million. Indeed, the total expenditure on all famines from the beginning of the century had been about only £4.57 million.[2]

The heavy cost of the famine and the unprecedented scale of the relief operations aroused criticism among some sections of the public. Even before the outcome of the summer monsoon was known some Anglo-Indian newspapers had begun to accuse the Government of extravagance. During the latter part of April the Pioneer had expressed dismay over the large amount of the Government's grain purchases.[3] As soon as it became clear that the Government was meeting distress wherever it occurred, the Pioneer claimed that the ryots were being demoralized. "The mere fact of success," it wrote, "proves that there has been exaggeration."[4] The Englishman was equally critical. It argued that the success of the Government's policy only increased the future danger of famine as a result of over-population.[5] As the famine drew to a conclusion both newspapers became

---

[1]Financial Statement, Muir, 31 Mar. 1876, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 962, No. 27, (May).
[2]Indian Famine Commission Report (1880), vol. 2, p. 147.
[3]Editorials, 20 and 23 Apr. 1874.
[4]Editorial, 2 May 1874.
[5]Editorial, 18 June 1874.

increasingly outspoken in their attacks accusing the Government of interfering with private trade, demoralizing the people, and wasting vast sums of money.[1] Except for the Friend of India and the Indian Economist, both of which had earlier led in the agitation for a vigorous famine policy and considered that the Government's achievement was outstanding, similar hostile criticism was expressed in most of the Anglo-Indian newspapers. These views were echoed in some sections of the British press, notably in the Pall Mall Gazette, whose Indian correspondent accused the Government of squandering its resources on a mere scarcity.[2] However, neither the Times nor the Daily News, which had sent a special correspondent to India to report on the famine, considered that there had been excessive extravagance.[3] Some of the Anglo-Indian criticism was probably promoted by merchants who had speculated in rice but were prevented from making large profits because the sale of Government rice had kept prices relatively low. Another cause of the bitter attacks on the Government may have been what Salisbury termed the

---

[1]Englishman, 8 July, 3 Aug., and 31 Dec. 1874; and Pioneer, 10 July and 17 Sept. 1874.

[2]Pall Mall Gazette, 10, 20, and 27 July 1874. The correspondent was undoubtedly Dr. W.W. Hunter, a prominent member of the Indian Civil Service, who contributed regularly to the Gazette, [Hunter to Baring, 28 Mar. 1873, Cromer P., vol. 1] and who, according to Northbrook, [to Mallet, 4 Dec. 1874, N.P., vol. 22] was one of the chief critics of the handling of the famine.

[3]Editorials, 28 Nov. and 1 Sept. 1874 respectively.

"ineradicable feeling [of many Anglo-Indians] that it is a mistake to spend so much money to save a lot of black fellows."[1] They probably feared, too, that an income-tax might be imposed to help pay the bill. But whatever the reasons there was no doubt that much of the European community endorsed the opinions of the Pioneer and the Englishman and leaned more and more heavily to the view that there had been little threat of serious famine. In fact a pamphlet written by "a Bengal Civilian" and published anonymously in 1876 denied the very existence of a famine.[2]

In contrast to the carping and critical attitude of much of the Anglo-Indian press, the Indian newspapers vigorously defended the Government's famine policy. This was particularly true of the Hindoo Patriot, the most influential Indian newspaper of the period. It admitted that some of the local works carried out by the Bengal Government were on "quite a sensational scale" but denied the Anglo-Indian allegation that the general relief operations were characterized by reckless extravagance.[3] It considered that the Government had "laid down a sound and humane principle" regarding labour tests and had done a great service in establishing the village relief system.[4]

---

[1] Salisbury to N., 21 Sept. 1874, Salisbury P., Letter Book I.
[2] The Black Pamphlet of Calcutta; the Famine of 1874.
[3] Editorial, 25 May 1874. [4] Ibid.

The Hindoo Patriot also reacted strongly against the charges that the Government's policy of advancing and selling grain was seriously interfering with private trade. In response to specific allegations to this effect made by the Englishman on 3 August, the Hindoo Patriot wrote:

> We are sorry ... that an unreasonable cry has been raised against Government, charging it with interference with private trade ... A more ungenerous and unjust charge could not be brought against the Government than this. ... At one time we thought that the courage, which Lord Northbrook shewed in insisting upon freedom of trade, when almost all India ... advocated prohibition of exports, was another name for rashness, but we must candidly confess that the results shew that his Lordship was right and we were wrong. One effect of this prohibition would probably have been that the big merchants would have combined and tyrannically ruled the market. ... But the wise policy of Lord Northbrook has averted this mischief, while it has thrown in food, where private trade was paralyzed. ...
>
> The general body of native rice-merchants ... admit that the importation of grain by Government has kept down the price of rice, but ... they ... confess that the private trader would have been totally unable to carry it far off into those distressed districts where it was most wanted, and to the extent required. ... They have not collectively suffered loss. ...
>
> It is only a few greedy merchants ... who bought at a dear market, who would not be content with small profits, and who therefore stored rice in the hope of making a fortune when the people would be reduced to starvation point, and who now apprehend loss. We are not sorry that these men have suffered.[1]

The Hindoo Patriot referred to those who claimed there was no famine as "heartless sceptics",[2] and though it admitted that there were "mistakes ..., imperfections and over-

---

[1]Editorial, 10 Aug. 1874.
[2]Editorial, 12 Oct. 1874.

sights, which magnified the disaster in some cases, and led to considerable waste of money in others",[1] it had nothing but praise for the Government's achievements. Following the conclusion of the relief operations it wrote:

> The success with which this fearful calamity was grappled by Government will remain a land-mark in the history of British rule in India. It has wiped away the stain which was cast upon the British name and character by the sad collapse of the measures of Government to meet similar calamities in the past. For the first time in the history of the British administration in this country did the Government recognise its duty to save the people from starvation at whatever cost.[2]

The Bengalee was somewhat more concerned over the cost of the famine and believed that much money would have been saved if the Government had prohibited exports instead of importing grain, but on the whole its views coincided with those of the Hindoo Patriot. It maintained that only "eccentric people" doubted the existence of serious famine and strongly applauded the Government's success in averting it.

> The year 1874 will be ever memorable in the annals of India as that in which humanity obtained for the first time a triumph over the conventional rules of statecraft, and the so-called principles of political economy. ... Famine has been everywhere thoroughly vanquished. ... The country is overflowing with gratitude towards its rulers for the provision made.[3]

This latter claim was no exaggeration for there was evidence

---

[1] Editorial, 30 Nov. 1874.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Editorial, 2 Jan. 1875.

of widespread gratitude especially among the people of Bihar.[1] Most of the vernacular newspapers in Bengal expressed support for the Government's famine policy,[2] and the British Indian Association presented an address to Northbrook strongly praising the achievement of his administration.[3]

On the whole, the Indian assessment of the Government's achievement was much fairer than that of the Anglo-Indians for, while there was undoubtedly considerable extravagance, the Government was not guilty of gross wastefulness or of inflating a mere scarcity into a famine. It was true that the famine was somewhat less serious than the Government had anticipated and at the conclusion of the relief operations it was left with a surplus of 100,000 tons of grain which it subsequently sold on the open market at considerable loss.[4] It attributed its over-estimating of the danger to two causes. "The stocks of food in the hands of the people turned out to be larger than was anticipated; and sufficient allowance was not made for the extraordinary exertions which were used by the cultivators [following the outbreak of the summer monsoon] to grow a greater quantity than usual of the grain crops

---

[1] N. to Temple, 13 Mar. 1875, Temple P., vol. 12.
[2] Bengal Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 15 Jan., 19 Feb., and 8 Apr. 1876.
[3] Address of B.I.A., 29 Dec. 1874, Argyll P., vol. 9.
[4] Indian Famine Commission Report (1880), vol. 2, p. 125.

which ripen in the [early] autumn."[1] But the Government maintained that the complete lack of agricultural statistics in Bengal made accurate forecasting impossible and this was certainly true. Officials had had no reliable information of the stocks of food in private hands at the beginning of the scarcity, and, while they had assumed that the supplies were sufficient for several months, the press and the British Indian Association had warned that the stocks were negligible. Nor had it been possible to foresee that the ryots would be particularly industrious in restoring their fields to full cultivation. The Government also failed, though it did not admit this, to take sufficient account of the activity of private trade. It was true that private traders imported little grain into northern Bihar, but it was estimated that they imported about 525,000 tons of food into those areas which were accessible to the main lines of communication.[2] In those areas the Government probably could have safely relied upon private commerce to supply grain for those who were employed on relief works and needed gratuitous assistance. There were also other less excusable reasons for the excess of the Government's grain provisions. After accepting Temple's generous estimate, based on an

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 18 Feb. 1875, Famine Proc., vol. 686, No. 17, (Feb.).

[2]Minute, Temple, 31 Oct. 1874, Temple P., vol. 127.

individual daily allowance of one and one-half pounds of grain, the Government should have provided only a small reserve instead of purchasing an additional 140,000 tons. However, much of the responsibility for this rested with the British Government, and if Northbrook had followed Salisbury's instructions the total grain purchases would have been about 650,000 tons rather than 480,000. No doubt, too, there was some extravagance in the actual relief operations. Wages for relief work may have been unnecessarily high in certain districts and some of the recipients of charitable assistance may not have been in dire need. Finally, the Government's policy of importing grain instead of prohibiting exports also enhanced expenditure considerably for, while it was true that Burma rice was cheap, freight charges were heavy. However, since total exports from Bengal for 1873-74 amounted to only 217,000 tons,[1] the Government would still have been obliged to import substantial quantities of rice to meet its required estimate. In fact the Government deserved much credit for preserving such complete secrecy about the extent of its purchases that it secured most of its orders at very reasonable rates and far more cheaply than would otherwise have been possible. Considering all the circumstances, therefore, it was surprising that expenditure on

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 18 Feb. 1875, loc. cit.

the famine did not exceed the £6.59 million actually spent.

Northbrook himself considered that in such a large undertaking as the Government's famine operations much waste was inevitable, but he was annoyed by the charges that there had been reckless spending and that there had been no real threat of famine. Partly in an attempt to find out for himself whether there was any basis for these allegations, he visited northern Bihar late in 1874. After seeing the country and holding discussions with officials, European planters, and prominent Indians, he concluded that the Government's measures had been absolutely necessary. He wrote:

> No foundation whatever exists for the opinion ... that the fear of famine has been grossly exaggerated. I have examined people of all sorts, and have found but one opinion -- that the danger was imminent, and that, without the importation of food by the Government, the mortality would have been very extreme indeed. Those who remember the failure of the rice crop in 1866 say that the failure of 1874 was much greater.[1]

This conclusion, unanimously supported as it was by Bengal public opinion, was undoubtedly correct. Without the Government's energetic measures the loss of life might well have equalled the figure of 2.25 million people estimated by Temple.[2]

Shortly after Northbrook's inspection tour the Indian Government adopted a resolution reviewing its entire

---

[1] N. to Salisbury, 2 Dec. 1874, N.P., vol. 11.
[2] Minute, Temple, 31 Oct. 1874, loc. cit.

famine policy. It defended its measures chiefly upon humanitarian grounds but also emphasized the economic and political advantages of its achievement.

> The measures that have been taken have not only prevented the extensive mortality which must otherwise have occurred, but the general productive power of the country has not been allowed to deteriorate, and there is no reason to believe that any demoralization has followed from the relief operations. The strongest assurances of the gratitude of the people have been received, and it may confidently be expected that the assistance which has been given by the State during a time of calamity will be long remembered and appreciated, not only on the scene of the distress, but throughout the whole ... Indian Empire.[1]

The Government recommended the principal features of its policy as a guide for future famines. Of particular interest in view of its belief in laissez-faire was its firm declaration of the State's duty to supply food wherever private trade proved inadequate. "Where there is a great deficiency," the Resolution stated, "and there is also good reason to believe that the traders will be unable to meet that deficiency ... it is right for the State to interfere for the purpose of supplementing the general food-supply." Had this policy been followed in the famine which occurred in southern India a few years later much mortality would have been averted.

Besides commending its general policy for future use the Government made a number of specific recommendations.

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 18 Feb. 1875, loc. cit.

The principal reason for the inaccuracy of the Government's forecast of the seriousness of the famine had been the complete lack of agricultural statistics in Bengal. To help remedy that defect, the provincial administration, on the instructions of the central Government, appointed the Collector of Darbhanga, A.P. MacDonnell, to inquire into the normal grain production and trade of the districts affected by the famine and to see how far the conditions of 1873-74 differed from those of ordinary years.[1] His report,[2] though it supplied much useful information, emphasized the need for the regular collection of agricultural statistics and this became one of the main functions of the Agriculture Department established by the Indian Government some years later.

The Government's other recommendations were concerned with the financing of relief operations and reducing the danger of famine. Because of the satisfactory condition of the finances during recent years the cost of the famine did not place the Government in any difficulty. But with his expert knowledge of Indian finance Northbrook realized that the Government would be unable to tackle recurring famines on a similar scale unless special arrangements

---

[1]Bengal Govt. to Indian Govt., 22 Mar. 1875, ibid., No. 1, (May).

[2]Report on the Food-Grain Supply and Statistical Review of the Relief Operations in the Distressed Districts of Behar and Bengal during the Famine of 1873-74.

were made for financing them. To raise the money simply by loan was out of the question since that would raise the public debt to unmanageable proportions. To avoid this the Government proposed that substantial budget surpluses should be maintained in ordinary years to provide for the cost of future famines.[1] This recommendation was of far-reaching importance and formed the basis for the famine insurance fund established some years later.[2]

Finally, the Government emphasized the need for pushing forward with railway construction and irrigation projects as a protection against famine. In mid-1873 it had adopted a five year programme of public works providing for the irrigation of 50,000 square miles of land and the building of 2,700 miles of railway lines.[3] Following the outbreak of famine the Government reviewed its programme taking into special consideration the needs of areas susceptible to drought.[4] Northbrook was anxious to maintain the existing rate of public works development and if possible to accelerate it. "Every new railway completed and every new judicious irrigation work opened," he wrote, "will reduce the area of danger until, in process of time, India will be no more liable to famines than Europe."[5]

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 23 Apr. 1874, Fin. Dept. Proc., vol. 734, No. 89, (May).

[2]P.J. Thomas, The Growth of Federal Finance in India, pp. 203-04.

[3]See above, p. 87

[4]Resolution, Indian Govt., 23 Apr. 1874, loc. cit.

[5]N. to Mallet, 31 May 1874, N.P., vol. 22.

However, as we have seen, Salisbury believed the Government was already investing too much money in public works and advised it to curtail its programme. Under this pressure the Indian Government reduced its spending by £500,000 a year, but it stoutly resisted further cuts. During the remainder of the century steady progress was made in public works but not at a sufficient rate to afford adequate protection against famine.

Though the Government's specific recommendations were of considerable importance in the development of a well defined system of famine administration in India, its greatest contribution was in the nature of the policies which it had actually adopted to overcome the famine. For the first time the Government had accepted a responsibility to utilize its full resources to avert a natural calamity. Unlike most former and succeeding administrations it was not blinded by theories of political economy into neglecting to provide food for the people when there was a likelihood that private trade would prove inadequate. Northbrook's Government also established the duty of the State to assume most of the responsibility for charitable relief instead of leaving that task mainly to the public. Other notable features of its policy were the introduction of the piece-work system of payment and the establishment of the village relief system. In fact the policies followed by Northbrook's Government were largely endorsed

by the Report of the Indian Famine Commission of 1880 and formed the basis for subsequent famine administration.

Apart from the importance of its policies for the future however, the Government's famine operations were an outstanding success in their own right, proving for the first time that distress on a large scale could be prevented. Considerable credit for this success belonged to Campbell, who, from the beginning of the scarcity until his retirement because of ill-health in April 1874, was responsible for the execution of policies, and to Temple, who spent several months supervising operations in the famine districts and succeeded to the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal. However, much of the credit for the Government's achievement rested with Northbrook personally. From the beginning he played a decisive role in the formulation of policy. He assumed almost sole responsibility for arranging the grain purchases, and, during the early stages of the famine particularly, he exerted much needed pressure on the provincial administration to ensure that organization was completed in time. Furthermore, he showed his personal devotion to the campaign against the famine by remaining in Calcutta during the summer of 1874 instead of going to Simla. Northbrook himself was immensely pleased by the success of his famine policy and regarded it as one of the greatest achievements of his administration. This view was widely shared by

Indian public opinion which also paid high tribute to Northbrook's personal contribution. "As a ruler," the Bengalee wrote, "Lord Northbrook has earned a renown second to none, and in Indian history his place will be in the same niche with Bentinck and Canning."[1] Even higher tribute came from the Hindoo Patriot which wrote:

> Praise is above all due to ... the Viceroy. His Excellency shewed a judgment, foresight, energy, self-sacrifice, and humanity, which will always be cherished in grateful recollection by the people, and which has earned for him the title of 'Father of the Poor'. His Lordship has added a chaplet of glory to the crown of England, which will shine with undying lustre.[2]

---

[1]Editorial, 2 Jan. 1875.
[2]Editorial, 1 Mar. 1875.

Chapter V

BARODA

The Proclamation of 1858, by which the Government had promised to respect 'the rights, dignity, and honour' of the princes and not to encroach upon their territorial possessions, had marked the beginning of a liberal policy towards the princely states. Northbrook, who regarded the princes as an important buttress of British rule, fully agreed with the principles laid down in 1858, and, in accord with his general policy of 'steady government', was anxious to maintain good relations with them. To assure them that he had no intention of deviating from established policy, he quoted the Proclamation "almost ad nauseum [sic] ... but in no way as a matter of form" during his first year in office.[1] Throughout his term he succeeded in maintaining good relations with most states except Baroda, in dealing with which he encountered much serious trouble.

Baroda, which had a population of over 2,000,000 in the 1870's and covered an area of around 7,000 square miles, was the second largest Maratha state in India. It was also the oldest Maratha state with a dynasty dating back to the early eighteenth century. Baroda had come under British protection in 1802 but during much of the

---

[1] N. to Salisbury, 1 Jan. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.

next fifty years its internal administration had been somewhat chaotic and its relations with the paramount power far from harmonious. However, the reigning Gaikwar, Khande Rao, remained loyal during the Mutiny, thereby rendering a valuable service to the British for which he was afterwards rewarded by the remission of the annual subsidy of Rs.3,00,000 which he had previously been obliged to pay towards the upkeep of the Gujarat Irregular Horse, a cavalry unit organized by the Bombay Government for service in that area.[1] From that time Baroda remained on good terms with the British authorities. However, the internal administration continued to be rather disorganized and inefficient and Khande Rao's rule, which had never been particularly benevolent, became increasingly oppressive during the latter part of the 1860's -- so much so that there were indications of growing discontent among the people.[2]

The difficulties caused by the general incompetence of the Baroda administration were aggravated by serious economic and financial problems. The state, one of whose chief exports was raw cotton, had shared in the great economic boom which had occurred in western India during the early 1860's as a result of the British demand for

---

[1] C.U. Aitchison, Treaties, Engagements and Sanads, vol. VI, p. 373.

[2] T.H. Thornton, General Sir Richard Meade, p. 161.

Indian cotton to replace its supplies from America which had been cut off by the Civil War. In Baroda the area under cotton production had greatly increased, the growth of food crops had declined, and rents and prices generally had risen considerably.[1] Following the conclusion of the American Civil War, the demand for Indian cotton suddenly ceased and the economic slump which hit most of western India was severely felt in Baroda. Many cultivators were unable to pay their rent and their debts increased yearly as a result of the Durbar's refusal to reduce the land assessment. By the early 1870's the arrears in the collection of land revenue amounted to around Rs.70,00,000, and the Baroda Government was approaching bankruptcy.

When Northbrook came to India there was a new Gaikwar on the throne. Khande Rao had died suddenly in 1870 leaving no male heir though his younger wife, Jumna Bai, was expecting a child. In the intervening time, Malhar Rao, the younger brother of the deceased Gaikwar, was placed on the throne. Malhar Rao had been accused of conspiring to poison the Gaikwar in 1863 and had been in prison since that date, but, since his guilt had never been proved, the Indian Government accepted him as heir presumptive. Following the birth of a daughter to Jumna Bai, Malhar Rao was confirmed as Gaikwar -- a position for

---

[1]Pelly to N., 13 Dec. 1874, N.P., vol. 16.

which he was by no means well qualified since he lacked the experience, training, and strong personality needed to deal with the serious difficulties confronting Baroda. Moreover, by disposition he was morose and revengeful and after seven years in prison he was antagonistic to those who had held responsible positions under the former Gaikwar. Nor was he well disposed towards the British who had not interceded on his behalf as long as Khande Rao had been alive. Conditions at Baroda undoubtedly went from bad to worse following his accession.

The first seriously disturbing event in Malhar Rao's reign occurred shortly after Northbrook's arrival in India. On 1 May 1872 Bhao Sindia, the Diwan of the former Gaikwar whom Malhar Rao had imprisoned shortly after taking power, died under suspicious circumstances.[1] That same morning the officiating Resident, Captain Hancock, received an anonymous letter stating that earlier in the day a peon at the prison had seen the jailer force Bhao Sindia to take poison. Hancock, who informed the Durbar officials of this letter and asked them to make an inquiry, learned from them some hours later that Bhao Sindia had died early that afternoon. However, they claimed that he had died of dengue fever and refused Hancock's request for a full investigation and a post-mortem examination by the British

---

[1]Hancock to Bombay Govt., 2 May 1872, Collections to Bombay Pol. Despatches, vol. 84, No. 36.

Residency surgeon. This refusal convinced the Bombay Government, which was responsible for relations with Baroda, that Bhao Sindia had not died a natural death and it passed a resolution casting suspicion upon the Gaikwar.[1] Malhar Rao deeply resented this, maintaining that Bhao Sindia had shown all the symptoms of fever and defending his refusal to hold an independent post-mortem examination on the grounds that it would have been "an unprecedented innovation".[2] However, as Northbrook pointed out, the disposal of the body without an independent post-mortem removed the only "satisfactory means of clearing up the doubt",[3] and the suspicion remained strong that Bhao Sindia had been poisoned.

Partly as a result of this affair the Bombay Government decided it would be advisable to have an enterprising Resident at Baroda. Colonel Shortt, who became Resident in the spring of 1872, was, like his predecessor, Colonel Barr, rather sympathetic towards princely rule and not inclined to exercise a strong influence over affairs. Wodehouse, the Governor of Bombay, considered that Shortt lacked the qualities needed of a Resident in a state whose administration was "corrupt and oppressive in the highest degree."[4] Northbrook, too, had a poor opinion of Shortt

---

[1] Resolution, Bombay Govt., 30 June 1872, ibid.
[2] Gaikwar to N., 12 Aug. 1872, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 3, pp. 98-100.
[3] N. to Gaikwar, 11 Oct. 1872, ibid., p. 101.
[4] Wodehouse to N., 9 June 1872, N.P., vol. 13.

and advised Wodehouse not to hesitate to replace him by an officer whom he could "thoroughly trust" if he had "any real apprehension as to Baroda affairs."[1] Wodehouse accepted this suggestion and in February 1873 appointed Colonel Robert Phayre as Resident. Phayre, who was impetuous and domineering in character and had little sympathy for 'native rule', could be relied upon to co-operate with the Bombay Government in its desire to exert pressure on the Gaikwar to reform his administration. But he had little experience for such a difficult and important position. In fact, in his former position as Political Superintendent of the Sind frontier, he had shown himself to be an unusually contentious officer by his disagreement with Sir William Merewether, the Commissioner of Sind, on the policy to be pursued in Kalat even though Merewether had the support of the Indian Government.[2] As a result he was sent home on leave early in 1872 and when he returned to India later that year Northbrook prevented him from resuming his position because he was "somewhat impracticable" and held "views adverse to the policy of the Government."[3] Nor was Northbrook happy about his appointment at Baroda and warned that he had "very little experience for so important a duty."[4] But since the matter was within the

---

[1] N. to Wodehouse, 20 Jan. 1873, ibid., vol. 14.
[2] Indian Govt. to Bombay Govt., 28 Dec. 1872, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 14, p. 21.
[3] N. to Wodehouse, 30 Dec. 1872, N.P., vol. 13.
[4] N. to Wodehouse, 7 Mar. 1873, ibid., vol. 14.

jurisdiction of the Bombay Government he did not intervene.

Phayre quickly reversed the policy of non-interference followed by his predecessors. Moreover, misgovernment and oppression had reached such a state that he found plenty to complain about. On 18 March, the day of his arrival in Baroda, Phayre learned, by anonymous letter, that eight people had been flogged so severely in the streets of the capital that one of them had died on the spot.[1] Believing that the incident had aroused much "popular excitement", Phayre contacted the Gaikwar about it. Malhar Rao stated that the eight men, some of whom belonged to his own household, had confessed to poisoning one of his personal servants who had been responsible for preparing his food. To deter others from a crime which he considered a threat to his own life, he had ordered the men to receive one dozen lashes at each of the four main gates of the city and another dozen before the house of the murdered man before going to prison for life. Malhar Rao admitted that one man had died under the flogging. Phayre considered this incident typical of the oppressive rule prevailing in Baroda and in the annual Resident's report submitted shortly afterwards he maintained that there were serious abuses not only in the judicial system but also in the general

---

[1]Phayre to Wodehouse, 25 Mar. 1873, Pol. Letters from Bombay, vol. 6, pp. 333-40.

administration.[1] He stated that recent enhancements in land assessments and other taxes had caused much discontent and hardship among the ryots and that several hundred families, unable to meet their demands, had deserted their villages. Nor was discontent confined to the lower classes for Phayre reported that a number of thakurs of Bijapur district were disaffected because of interference with their hereditary rights and the imposition of new taxes and that they had appealed to him to influence the Gaikwar to grant them redress. Finally, he stated that the Baroda authorities sometimes caused extensive "stoppage" of "banking and commercial transactions" by confiscating property belonging to members of the business community. Phayre, who took an extremely serious view of this situation, warned the Bombay Government that, unless some "wholesome check" were at once imposed, matters would grow "worse and worse" until they culminated in "a general outbreak".

The Bombay Government was deeply disturbed over the misgovernment revealed in Phayre's report and declared that the "perpetuation" of such abuses would cause "much suffering" to Baroda subjects "and destroy the prosperity of the State."[2] It instructed Phayre to remind the Gaikwar

---

[1]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 29 Apr. 1873, ibid., vol. 5, pp. 1978-88.

[2]Resolution, Bombay Govt., 6 June 1873, ibid., pp. 2105-06.

that the freedom of selecting his Diwan, recently conceded to him,[1] had been granted "on the understanding ... that His Highness would be personally responsible for the conduct of affairs and ... give due weight to advice offered by the British Resident."[2]

One cause of great dissatisfaction to Phayre and to the Government was the inefficiency of the Baroda Contingent, a force of 3,000 cavalry, which the Gaikwar was bound by treaty to maintain. The Contingent, part of which was employed in the British tributary states interspersing Baroda territory, had long been in need of reform. Rules for its improvement had been agreed upon by the Gaikwar and the Bombay Government in 1868 but they had not been put into effect.[3] Consequently, in 1872 Argyll advised the Bombay Government to take "the earliest favorable opportunity" of urging the Gaikwar to reform the force.[4] However, little was done in this connection until Phayre became Resident. For a brief period before his appointment Phayre had served as Political Superintendent of Palanpur, a tributary state in northern Gujarat, and had found that the branch of the Contingent serving there was extremely

---

[1]This right had first been conceded in 1867 but was reaffirmed in 1873 when the office was left vacant by the death of Malhar Rao's Diwan, Gopal Rao Myral.

[2]Resolution, Bombay Govt., loc. cit.

[3]Bombay Govt. to Indian Govt., 25 July 1873, ibid., vol. 6, p. 318.

[4]S.S. to Bombay Govt., 14 Aug. 1872, Pol. Despatches to Bombay, vol. 13.

inefficient.[1] Shortly after taking office at Baroda, therefore, he urged that "500 out of the 900 horse in Kattywar should be made effective in every respect and placed under the direct command of an European officer."[2] However, the Gaikwar rejected these proposals. He pointed out that the appointment of a European officer would be contrary to treaty engagements and denied that the Contingent was in need of reform.[3] Phayre was indignant at this response and advised the Bombay Government to compel the Gaikwar to enter into negotiations "for an entire reorganization of the whole force."[4] Phayre envisaged the establishment of a force under European command and thought that the Gaikwar should be forced to pay for its cost by "a permanent cession of territory" to the British.

In the meantime the general administration of Baroda continued to deteriorate and during the summer of 1873 Phayre sent increasingly alarming accounts of conditions to the Bombay Government. It was true that some of his complaints were unreasonable, relating to minor matters which a more astute political officer would have ignored. An example of this was the strong protest which he made to the Gaikwar over his habit of fast driving -- a practice

---

[1]Report, Phayre, 10 Mar. 1873, Pol. Letters from Bombay, vol. 6, pp. 249-54.

[2]Phayre to Gaikwar, 9 May 1873, quoted in Phayre to Bombay Govt., 25 June 1873, ibid., p. 196.

[3]Gaikwar to Phayre, 20 May 1873, ibid., pp. 213-24.

[4]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 25 June 1873, op. cit., p. 206.

which caused much annoyance to British officers who were obliged to make way for his carriage.[1] However, most of the matters which Phayre reported were of considerable gravity. One of the most serious cases concerned the Bijapur thakurs whom the Gaikwar had failed to placate. According to Phayre the Diwan stated that a number of them "had declared their determination to fight rather than yield to ... demands of extra taxes."[2] Phayre advised that they should be given a safe conduct to come to the Court where their grievances could be personally attended to by the Gaikwar. Both sides agreed to this though there was little prospect of reaching a settlement since Malhar Rao maintained that "he would never give up his right" to impose the taxes, while the thakurs remained adamantly opposed to payment.[3] There were indications, too, of growing discontent among the sirdars and military classes, many of whom had had their allowances reduced or cut off by the Government as part of an effort to reduce expenditure. Moreover, little had been done to ease the burdens of the ryots or to improve relations with the business community.

Phayre was extremely disturbed over this situation and became increasingly critical of the Gaikwar and his ministers. In a report towards the end of June he condemned

---

[1]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 5 July 1873, ibid., pp. 359-74.
[2]Phayre to Gaikwar, 25 June 1873, ibid., p. 385.
[3]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 28 June and 4 July 1873, ibid., p. 391 and pp. 425-29 respectively.

them as altogether unfit to rule.[1] He suspected Malhar Rao of "latent insanity". "I can account in no other way," Phayre wrote, "for his infatuated conduct as a Ruler, who ... makes all the ... interests of his state & subjects, subservient to his own inordinate thirst for wealth and self gratification." But he blamed much of the misgovernment on the Gaikwar's "evil advisers", the most important of whom was the Diwan, Sivaji Rao, who could barely read and write, had no administrative experience, and was "avaricious in the extreme". Phayre alleged that appointments under his control were "sold to the highest bidder" and since he was also in charge of the Contingent held him mainly responsible for its inefficiency. Phayre was equally critical of the Revenue Minister, Hariba Gaikwar, and his assistant, Narayan Lallubhai. He maintained that the former was "accused of oppression and bribery" and that his accounts had not been audited for ten years, while the latter was "thoroughly detested by all classes of people". In Phayre's opinion the corrupt practices of these and other ministers was largely responsible "for the positive reign of terror" prevailing in Baroda.

The reports of continuing maladministration and of the refusal to reform the Contingent caused the Bombay Government growing concern. It considered that strong measures

---

[1]Memo., Phayre, 28 June 1873, ibid., pp. 407-23.

would soon be required to force the Gaikwar to correct abuses and advised Phayre to warn him that it was only "by acting in harmony with our views, and by conducting his Government in a spirit" which would "do credit to the Protecting Power" that he could "expect to retain any claim to ... protection and support."[1] This warning, however, seemed to have little effect, for a few weeks later Phayre reported further cases of oppression. He alleged that two people had been given harsh prison sentences for minor offences; that he had received an "authentic account" of extensive bribery on the part of the Diwan; and that recently the practice had come into vogue of "seizing married and unmarried girls" to serve as household slaves at the Court.[2] Shortly after urgently referring these matters to the Durbar, Phayre received an unexpected visit from the Gaikwar who was greatly agitated by an article which he had read in a vernacular newspaper claiming that the British were going to dethrone him because of his misrule. Phayre gave the following account of the meeting:

> [The Gaikwar] fell at my feet, put off his cap, and bowing his head to the ground burst into tears, and began to declare that he had no wish whatever to oppose the Government in anything; that he was really its dependent ..., and that he was a lost man if he lost their favour.[3]

Phayre informed him "that if he would alter his line of

---

[1]Bombay Govt. to Phayre, 25 July 1873, ibid., p. 443.
[2]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 18 Aug. 1873, ibid., pp. 701-04.
[3]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 19 Aug. 1873, ibid., pp. 707-08.

conduct, and listen to all reasonable demands, his relations with the British Government would remain on a friendly footing." The Gaikwar promised to comply. To impress upon his ministers the vital importance of reform he called them to the Residency and, in Phayre's presence, warned them that if they refused to co-operate they would be discharged. Phayre was well pleased by this turn of events but a few days later another case of misrule came to his attention. On 23 August about 400 ryots of the Baroda district, headed by their patels, came to the Residency complaining that they were unable to cultivate their fields because of the Gaikwar's establishment of a game reserve for hunting deer.[1] But when Phayre discussed this matter with the Diwan and Revenue Minister they refused to reduce the number of deer, though this was one of the main demands of the villagers. These reports convinced the Bombay Government that the Gaikwar's promises of improvements could not be trusted and that even if he desired reform he would be thwarted by his ministers. In its opinion the time had come for "immediate and authoritative interference" in Baroda affairs.[2] Consequently, it appealed to the Indian Government for authority to order the Gaikwar to discharge the Diwan and the Revenue Minister and deputy.

---

[1]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 24 Aug. 1873, ibid., pp. 708-10.
[2]Bombay Govt. to Indian Govt., 29 Aug. 1873, ibid., pp. 699-701.

In addition, it requested permission to appoint a British commission to inquire into the administration of the state.

Northbrook thought that the reports of maladministration were exaggerated but considered that they were too serious to be ignored. He therefore agreed to an inquiry though he decided that the commission would be appointed by the central Government. In this way he aimed to check the zeal of the Bombay Government which he blamed for encouraging rather than restraining Phayre's interference in Baroda affairs.[1] As chairman Northbrook appointed Colonel Robert Meade, Chief Commissioner of Mysore, an experienced officer who had a reputation for steadiness in dealing with the princes. As a further guarantee against the defects of the Baroda administration being "too harshly dealt with", Northbrook appointed a prominent Indian statesman, Nawab Faiz Ali Khan, former Diwan of Jaipur, to serve on the commission.[2] The other two members were chosen by the Bombay Government. In its instructions to the commission the Indian Government advised that it should guard against frivolous complaints and not interfere in the details of the administration.[3] Probably fearing that the Bombay Government would be over-zealous in pressing for improvements in the Contingent, the Indian Government

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 27 Mar. 1874, N.P., vol. 11.
[2]N. to Clerk, 27 Feb. 1874, ibid., vol. 22.
[3]Indian Govt. to Bombay Govt., 19 Sept. 1873, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 3, pp. 73-75.

declared that the commission should also investigate the condition of the force. At the same time it stated that it did not wish the Contingent to be maintained at a standard of high fighting efficiency and that it would be satisfied as long as it could effectively perform peace time duties. Despite strong protests from Bombay on the grounds that the Contingent was exclusively under its jurisdiction and should not be investigated by the commission, the Indian Government adhered to its decision. Northbrook displeased Bombay still further by his refusal to force the Gaikwar to dismiss his three ministers until the inquiry showed whether such a step was justified.

The Gaikwar, as might have been expected, objected to the establishment of a commission of inquiry. He protested that such a measure was unnecessary since he had already promised Phayre that he would reform his administration.[1] However, Northbrook rejected his appeal that the inquiry should be abandoned. One effect of the establishment of the commission was to convince Malhar Rao that his continuance on the throne would be in jeopardy unless far-reaching reforms were introduced. But he evidently considered this would not be achieved by his present ministers and shortly after the establishment of the commission obtained the services of Dadabhai Naoroji, a talented Parsi from Bombay,

---

[1]Gaikwar to N., 25 Oct. 1873, ibid., pp. 75-77.

to act as Diwan. Naoroji lacked administrative experience, but he had considerable academic and business experience and was well known in India and Britain, partly through his activities as secretary of the East India Association.[1] Naoroji secured the services of competent men to fill the important positions of Revenue Minister, Chief Justice, and Chief Magistrate, though for the time being none of them were officially given the seals of these offices.

Meanwhile the commission had begun its hearings at Baroda early in November. Phayre brought forward the cases to be investigated and a member of the Baroda Durbar was permitted to cross-examine witnesses. The commission examined the complaints of sixty-five Baroda subjects. It found the Baroda authorities agreeable and co-operative but had considerable disagreement with Phayre as a result of his eagerness to expose abuses.[2] It refused to investigate more than twenty of the cases which he brought forward on the grounds that the evidence was inadequate. After concluding its hearings in the last week of December the commission went to Bombay where it analysed the evidence

---

[1]Naoroji had visited Baroda early in 1872 to seek assistance for the Association. Impressed by his ability Malhar Rao had called him back there later that year to give him advice in a dispute which he had been having with the Bombay Government over his position in relation to the Governor on ceremonial occasions. The Gaikwar maintained that the Governor should be seated on his left but since that would indicate his inferiority to the Gaikwar the Bombay Government refused to agree.

[2]Report, undated, P.P., vol. lvi (1875), No. C.1203.

and prepared its report.

The report, submitted in March 1874, confirmed the existence of serious misgovernment in Baroda and that the sirdars and military classes, the thakurs, the ryots, and some members of the commercial community had serious grievances. It found that respectable women were sometimes forced to become palace slaves and condemned the harshness of the judicial system. It also concluded that Malhar Rao had been "unusually harsh and severe" towards his predecessor's friends and that much of his behaviour was "calculated to bring discredit" on the administration and arouse "distrust and alarm" among the influential classes. Finally, the commission found that the Contingent was disorganized and undisciplined.

In accordance with its instructions the commission made recommendations for increasing the efficiency of the Contingent and more especially for improving the general administration of Baroda. Considering Malhar Rao's record it did not think that he could be expected, of himself, to raise the standard of administration to a level which would entitle him to the confidence of his subjects or the support of the British. Nor did it consider that there was any prospect of reforms being achieved as long as the Diwan, Sivaji Rao, and other leading ministers remained in office[1] and advised their removal. The commission

---

[1]Naoroji's Ministry was still serving under acting tenure.

recommended that the Diwan should "be selected with reference to his administrative experience, and personal and other special qualifications" and that he should not "be liable to removal without the special orders of the British Government." It proposed that for the time being the Resident should be authorized to intervene between the Gaikwar and the Diwan, for it was convinced that the strong influence of the paramount power was needed to secure reforms.

The Bombay Government was pleased that the commission's findings had shown that an official inquiry had been justified and strongly endorsed its recommendations for greater control by the Resident and for the dismissal of the existing ministers.[1] It strongly opposed confirming Naoroji as Diwan. It considered that he would "make every effort" to improve the administration, but believed that "the Gaekwar and his agents would ... shelter themselves" behind his reputation and that "he would be powerless for any reform of abuses." Instead, it asked the central Government for authority to recommend a Diwan. Except for Wodehouse's restraining influence his Government would have recommended much greater control than the commission had proposed.[2] As it was, two Councillors, H.P. Tucker and

---

[1]Bombay Govt. to Indian Govt., 5 Mar. 1874, Pol. Letters from Bombay, vol. 10, pp. 2963-66.

[2]Wodehouse to N., 4 Mar. 1874, N.P., vol. 15.

A. Rogers, urged stronger measures.[1] Another Councillor, J. Gibbs, absent at the time, later recommended that Malhar Rao be removed from the throne pending the introduction of reforms, that the entire Durbar be dismissed, and that a prominent Indian statesman or a council of Regency under a European officer be appointed to govern the state.[2]

Even the more moderate recommendations of the Government were not welcomed by Northbrook who wished to avoid greater involvement in Baroda affairs. He favoured giving the Gaikwar a firm warning and leaving him free to effect reforms, but before making any decision sent him a copy of the commission's report. Malhar Rao strongly resented the proposed interference with his choice of Diwan and requested Northbrook to delay a decision until he replied to the report.[3] Considering that it was "only decent" to allow the Gaikwar to defend his administration, Northbrook gave him a month to prepare a reply.[4] However, the Gaikwar never answered the charges made by the commission. He had promised to do so without the agreement of Naoroji who thought that much of his past conduct could not be justified and declined to prepare a defence.[5] The Gaikwar

---

[1]Minutes, 1 and 3 Mar. 1874, Pol. Letters from Bombay, vol. 10, pp. 2967-88.
[2]Minute, Gibbs, 28 May 1874, ibid., pp. 2991-94.
[3]Gaikwar to N., 19 Apr. 1874, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 3, pp. 89-90.
[4]N. to Wodehouse, 2 May 1874, N.P., vol. 15.
[5]Naoroji, Baroda Administration in 1874, pp. 19-20.

finally assented to this view and informed Northbrook that he had decided that his future rather than his past conduct was the vital concern.[1] He promised to direct all his efforts towards introducing reform.

After much consideration, Northbrook decided against increased interference in Baroda. He feared that the Gaikwar would never co-operate with a Diwan whom he was forced to accept. Moreover, if the administration continued to deteriorate the Government would be partly responsible and its justification for further authoritative measures would be weakened.[2] But if he gave the Gaikwar a firm warning and left him free to introduce improvements, Northbrook thought he would be justified in deposing him without further inquiry should serious trouble arise. These views formed the basis of the official decision of the Indian Government announced in July. It declined to recommend a Diwan, preferring "to hold the Gaekwar himself responsible for the good government of his State under a warning that if, before 31st December 1875, he does not reform his administration he will be deposed from power."[3] However, in the interests of reform, it advised that he "would do well" to remove Sivaji Rao and other leading

---

[1] Gaikwar to N., 17 May 1874, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 3, pp. 91-93.

[2] N. to Meade, 16 June 1874, N.P., vol. 15.

[3] Indian Govt. to Bombay Govt., 25 July 1874, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 3, pp. 94-96.

ministers. The Government directed that Phayre should give the Diwan his fullest support in introducing reform, but, realizing his proclivities, warned that he should not "paralyse the efforts of the Native Government by attempting to originate or carry them out himself." Northbrook, who considered that the commission's report showed Phayre to be "greatly wanting in judgement and discretion", had misgivings about his remaining in office.[1] But he thought that to remove him at that time might lead the Gaikwar to believe that the Government was not in earnest in demanding reforms and allowed him to continue as Resident. Northbrook was by no means optimistic that the Government's proposals would lead to a permanent solution of the Baroda difficulties, but thought there was a "forlorn" hope that the Gaikwar might "be frightened into making some sufficient improvements."[2]

Substantial reform might have been achieved if a more diplomatic and sympathetic person than Phayre had been Resident. He was annoyed at the moderateness of the Indian Government's recommendations and regretted that the Gaikwar's freedom to choose his Diwan had been upheld. He was deeply displeased over the prospect of the formal appointment of Naoroji, who had earned his strong antipathy by conducting the Gaikwar's campaign for a place of

---

[1]N. to Wodehouse, 3 Sept. 1874, N.P., vol. 15.
[2]N. to Clerk, 1 Aug. 1874, ibid., vol. 22.

precedence over the Bombay Governor.[1] "The results of this preposterous claim," Phayre later declared, "have been to inflate to an inordinate extent a singularly ignorant and uneducated Prince, whose natural ideas would never have reached such an extravagant height, but for the promptings of interested and unscrupulous advisers."[2] After Naoroji assumed the acting Diwanship Phayre's dislike for him intensified. He considered that one of Naoroji's main objects was to make money for himself and doubted whether the Gaikwar would delegate him the authority needed to effect reforms. One of the first matters on which they came into conflict was the marriage of Malhar Rao to Lakshmi Bai, a woman of low class who was alleged to have been already married.[3] Phayre considered the marriage a scandalous affair and was extremely angry with Naoroji for supporting the Gaikwar on the issue.

His antipathy towards Naoroji was further aroused some months later when he heard that he and his colleagues had drawn up a twenty-five article programme for reform to be achieved by giving them greater control over government. Phayre, who had earlier argued that Naoroji and his colleagues lacked the power to introduce improvements,

---

[1] See above, p. 208, foot-note 1.

[2] Phayre to Bombay Govt., 2 Nov. 1874, Pol. Letters from Bombay, vol. 10, p. 3281.

[3] Phayre to Bombay Govt., 9 May 1874, P.P., vol. lvi (1875), No. C.1249.

maintained that this programme would have the effect of making "over the Raj" to them.[1] He warned the Gaikwar not to agree to this and informed him of his contempt for Naoroji, though in so doing he was violating the Government's instructions to support the Diwan. Informing the Bombay Government of this, Phayre wrote:

> I gave my decided opinion that Mr. Dadabhai and his party had not the knowledge, ability and experience or weight of character sufficient to carry out the reforms needed ...; that none of the people from the Sirdars downwards had the least confidence in them; and that judging from the fair trial [which they had had] ..., I saw no hope of the requisite work being done by them; ... and that as regards His Highness signing an agreement to make over his Riasut to any one whatever, except the British Government, I looked upon the very proposal on Mr. Dadabhai's part as an offence against the sovereignty of the Paramount Power; and that if such a matter were to come officially before me I should take most serious notice of it.[2]

Phayre advised the Gaikwar to inform Naoroji of these views, hoping no doubt that he would be induced to resign. He promised that he would lend one of his own Indian assistants to act as Diwan.

However, the Gaikwar rejected Phayre's advice and a few days later announced the dismissal of his former ministers and Naoroji's appointment as Diwan. He requested that Naoroji be given the usual military honours by the British authorities.[3] To add to Phayre's indignation, he

---

[1]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 11 Aug. 1874, Pol. Letters from Bombay, vol. 10, pp. 3042-46.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Durbar Yads, 14 Aug. 1874, ibid., pp. 3076-77 and 3090-91.

was addressed as 'tum' -- a form used for servants and menials -- and was told that the Durbar would ask for his advice whenever it wanted assistance. Phayre considered that the latter statement, for which he believed Naoroji was responsible, indicated a deliberate intention to "thwart" his efforts to secure reforms.[1] He wrote at once to Bombay denouncing Naoroji, implying that his loyalty could not be trusted, and urging the Government not to accord him military honours or to approve his appointment as Diwan.[2]

Phayre's accusations against Naoroji were largely unjustified. It was true that Phayre had been addressed as 'tum' but Naoroji claimed that this had been an oversight and apologized for it.[3] Moreover, he and his colleagues had made some progress in reform, one of their greatest achievements being the abolition of the 'nazrana system', whereby judicial cases were decided in favour of the highest bidder.[4] However, they laboured under great difficulties partly because of Phayre's opposition to them, and partly because the Government's long delay (five months) in announcing its decision on the findings of the commission had encouraged the Durbar officials to revive

---

[1]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 14 Aug. 1874, ibid., pp. 3072-75.

[2]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 15 Aug. 1874, ibid., pp. 3085-90.

[3]Naoroji, Baroda Administration in 1874, p. 13.

[4]Ibid., p. 10.

their intrigues and to hamper reform. Having taken office on the understanding that his main duty would be to introduce reforms, Naoroji resented this relapse. He realized that there was little prospect of achieving his objective unless he was given greater authority and it was this which led him to draw up the 'twenty-five articles' to which Phayre had taken such objection. However, before the Gaikwar reached any decision on these proposals, the Indian Government's conclusions on the commission's findings were announced. Realizing Phayre's strong dislike for them and wishing to leave the Gaikwar free to act as he thought best in the appointment of ministers, Naoroji and his colleagues submitted their resignations on 9 August.[1] Instead of accepting their resignations, the Gaikwar, as already mentioned, decided to confirm them in office. Although Naoroji and his associates received no guarantee of increased power over the reform programme, they accepted this offer. They no doubt expected that with the removal of the former ministers they would be able to make considerable progress.

Even the Bombay Government, which was far from sympathetic towards Naoroji, disapproved of Phayre's behaviour. "The advice which you ... have given [the Gaikwar about the Naoroji Ministry_7," it wrote, "went far beyond what

---

[1]Ibid., p. 18.

was called for at that time, and was indeed hardly to be sustained by the facts of the case."[1] Fearing that a written warning alone would be insufficient, Wodehouse summoned Phayre to Poona and reprimanded him for "wholly ignoring" the clear-cut instructions of the Government not to interfere in the choice of a Diwan.[2] "You have placed yourself in a position of such decided hostility to the Dewan whom the Gaekwar has appointed," Wodehouse declared, "as to impede most seriously the cordial co-operation of the Minister and yourself in carrying out ... administrative reforms." To his great humiliation, Phayre was instructed to inform the Gaikwar that the Government approved Naoroji's appointment and would support his efforts for reform. Phayre was also informed that further disobedience of instructions would lead to his removal.

However, Phayre's hostility to Naoroji was so deep-rooted that real co-operation was impossible. He continued what the ministers considered an irritating interference. In the latter part of September, Naoroji wrote to a friend:

> I am under a very unfair trial ... Colonel Phayre will not allow me rest. His presence alone is enough to throw any amount of difficulties in my way, as people remain in the same disturbed ... state of mind as before. ... He begins to show signs of active opposition to me. Unless the Colonel gives me support,

---

[1]Bombay Govt. to Phayre, 16 Aug. 1874, Pol. Letters from Bombay, vol. 10, p. 3047.

[2]Bombay Govt. to Phayre, 24 Aug. 1874, ibid., pp. 3091-97. This letter records the advice which Wodehouse gave to Phayre at their personal meeting.

> my task is almost impossible. ... I ... may have to appeal to the Viceroy.[1]

During the next month Phayre showed increasing sympathy towards the disaffected sections of the community, many of whose grievances had still not been settled. To make matters worse a new dispute arose as a result of the birth of a son to Lakshmi Bai, the woman whom Malhar Rao had married despite Phayre's objections. Because the child was born less than six months after the marriage, Phayre refused to attend the festivities over his birth or to recognize him as heir to the throne. This was a great blow to the Gaikwar and led to a further deterioration in relations with the Residency.

Phayre, who had been instructed to keep the Bombay Government informed of progress at Baroda, reported on 2 November that none of the improvements recommended by the commission had been achieved.[2] He gave two principal reasons for this failure. The first was "the financial embarrassment of the ... State", which he estimated was Rs.1.5 crores in debt. The other reason, Phayre maintained, was "the entire inability of ... Dadabhai's administration to grasp, and effectively deal with, the causes of the chronic anarchy into which the State has fallen." He

---

[1]Quoted in Chintamon to Perry, 20 Oct. 1874, enc. in Perry to N., 24 Oct. 1874, N.P., vol. 22.

[2]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 2 Nov. 1874, Pol. Letters from Bombay, vol. 10, pp. 3253-83.

foresaw little prospect of reform as long as they remained in office.

Naoroji, on the other hand, considered Phayre to be the chief obstacle to progress and concluded that there was no hope of improvement while he remained Resident. The Gaikwar agreed and in a letter dated 2 November appealed to Northbrook for his removal.[1] He claimed that Phayre showed so much sympathy for the disaffected sirdars and ryots that he not only increased the difficulty of settling their grievances but encouraged other groups to come forward with complaints. The Gaikwar knew that the decision on whether he might remain on the throne after 31 December 1875 would depend to a large extent on the Resident's reports, but pointed out that he could not expect an "impartial report" from Phayre who had been his "prosecutor with a determined ... will and purpose." Finally, he reminded Northbrook that his pledge to give him a fair opportunity to introduce reforms would be meaningless as long as Phayre remained Resident.

Northbrook, who for some months had had misgivings about Phayre's remaining at Baroda, considered the Gaikwar's request reasonable. Although he had not been kept informed of events at Baroda during the previous four months and was unaware of the way in which Phayre had flouted his

---

[1]Gaikwar to N., 2 Nov. 1874, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 143, (Jan.).

instructions,[1] Northbrook decided it would be inadvisable to retain him. On 12 November he informed Wodehouse of his decision.[2]

In the meantime, events at Baroda had taken another serious turn. After taking a few sips of his customary glass of sherbet on 9 November Phayre noticed some dark sediment in the bottom of the tumbler.[3] He at once concluded that an attempt had been made to poison him and the Residency surgeon confirmed that there was arsenic in the tumbler. Wodehouse informed Northbrook of this news on 13 November and asked whether under these circumstances he should still urge Phayre to resign.[4] Northbrook was "disgusted" at the attempt to poison Phayre but did not think it altered the case for his removal.[5] He indicated that Phayre might use "his own discretion", but advised that he should resign on the grounds that he wished "no personal consideration affecting him to interfere with the satisfactory solution of affairs."[6] However, Phayre rejected this advice, maintaining that his stay at Baroda would be "beneficial to the public service" and that

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 27 Nov. 1874, N.P., vol. 12.
[2]Telegram, 12 Nov. 1874, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 126A, (Jan.).
[3]Phayre to Residency Surgeon, 9 Nov. 1874, ibid., No. 132, (Jan.).
[4]Telegram, 13 Nov. 1874, ibid., No. 128, (Jan.).
[5]N. to Wodehouse, 17 and 25 Nov. 1874, N.P., vol. 16.
[6]Telegram, Viceroy to Gov., 13 Nov. 1874, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 129, (Jan.).

"resignation without other employment" would be tantamount to admitting that he had failed to fulfil his duties and involve him "in a degree of professional disgrace" that he did not deserve.[1] Although Wodehouse supported Phayre's decision, Northbrook's mind was made up. In fact, after receiving copies of the correspondence on Baroda affairs between July and November, Northbrook concluded that firm action was imperative. He was shocked to learn the extent to which Phayre had violated his instructions and annoyed at the Bombay Government for having kept him "in the dark for so long."[2] On 25 November the Indian Government issued orders for Phayre's removal and announced that Sir Lewis Pelly, an officer who had considerable experience in relations with princely states,[3] would replace him.[4] To avoid the risk of divided responsibility and future misunderstanding between Bombay and Calcutta, Pelly was appointed as 'Agent to the Governor-General' to whom he was directly responsible for all matters connected with reform. Only routine administrative subjects remained under the control of Bombay. Although events had shown

---

[1]Phayre to Wodehouse, 17 Nov. 1874, enc. in Wodehouse to N., 18 Nov. 1874, N.P., vol. 16.

[2]N. to Salisbury, 27 Nov. 1874, ibid., vol. 11.

[3]Pelly (1825-92). Joined Bombay Army 1841; Assistant Resident at Baroda, 1851-52; served with John Jacob on Sind frontier; Political Resident in Persian Gulf, 1862-71; Governor-General's Agent in Rajputana, 1874.

[4]Indian Govt. to Bombay Govt., 25 Nov. 1874, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 144, (Jan.).

these measures to be necessary, they were strongly opposed by the Bombay Government which bitterly protested against Phayre's "summary removal" and the "abrupt withdrawal" of its "direct control of the affairs of Baroda."[1]

With Pelly's assumption of office early in December there were prospects of real reform. Naoroji and the Gaikwar were extremely pleased over Phayre's removal and his replacement by an experienced officer who was subject to the Viceroy and promised to do their utmost to introduce reforms. Pelly, who realized that the establishment of an efficient administration would take considerable time, was anxious to co-operate. Measures were urgently required to settle the worst grievances of the people and at the Gaikwar's request Pelly worked side by side with Naoroji in investigating complaints. In a short time they redressed many of the grievances of the sirdars and eased the immediate burden on the ryots by remitting part of the year's revenue demand. In an effort to replenish the empty treasury, they tried to devise means of reducing annual expenditure by Rs.36,00,000 to bring it into line with income[2] -- an object which they thought could be achieved by greater ministerial control over expenditure and the keeping of more detailed accounts. In fact reforms were undertaken

---

[1]Bombay Govt. to Indian Govt., 14 Dec. 1874, Pol. Letters from Bombay, vol. 10, pp. 2939-41.

[2]Pelly to N., 28 Dec. 1874, N.P., vol. 16.

in practically every branch of the administration.

Despite this promising period of improvement all was not going well at Baroda. Once Phayre had been removed, the Gaikwar paid little attention to Naoroji's advice and relations between them steadily deteriorated. According to Pelly, Naoroji complained that the Gaikwar interfered in the routine of administration and treated him as a mere reference clerk.[1] Moreover, the Gaikwar refused to dismiss his private secretary, Damodar Pant, and other friends and relatives whom Naoroji blamed for hindering improvements.[2] Convinced that they no longer had the support of the Gaikwar, Naoroji and his colleagues submitted their resignations on 21 December. Pelly held discussions with both parties but failed to reconcile their differences. According to him the Gaikwar considered that Naoroji was "unable to conduct the administration of a Maratta State, with which he was comparatively unacquainted, and wherein he possessed neither the confidence nor the sympathy of the nobles or people."[3] He therefore accepted the resignations and Naoroji and his colleagues left Baroda early in 1875.

Apart from their departure, affairs at Baroda took yet another serious turn in the last weeks of 1874. Before

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] Naoroji, Baroda Administration in 1874, p. 21; and R.P. Masani, Dadabhai Naoroji, pp. 171-72.

[3] Pelly to N., 28 Dec. 1874, N.P., vol. 16.

his removal Phayre had started an investigation into the attempt to poison him and on the basis of the evidence collected had concluded that the deed had been done by some of the Residency servants.[1] Since the sediment left in his glass had been found to contain diamond dust[2] as well as arsenic and since the former substance was very expensive, Phayre at once jumped to the conclusion that they had been instigated by the Gaikwar. But Phayre had not discovered any evidence for this and no action was taken on the basis of his findings. However, after Pelly took over a thorough investigation was undertaken by F.H. Souter, the Bombay Commissioner of Police. On 16 December Souter discovered that the Gaikwar had been secretly communicating with one of the Residency servants.[3] The other servants were questioned and a few days later Raoji, the havildar, confessed, on promise of pardon, that he had administered the poison at the direct instigation of the Gaikwar. As a result of his evidence, Narsu, the jemadar, was arrested. In an unconditional confession he stated that he had been involved along with Raoji and confirmed that the Gaikwar had instigated the poisoning attempt. After Souter completed his investigations around

---

[1]Phayre to Bombay Govt., 17 Nov. 1874, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 153, (Jan.).

[2]Diamond dust was commonly believed to be poisonous though in fact it was not.

[3]Souter to Pelly, undated, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 197, (Jan.).

the end of December, the evidence was examined by the Advocate-General of Bombay, who concluded that a strong prima facie case had been made out against the Gaikwar.[1] Pelly fully endorsed this conclusion and recommended that the Gaikwar be at once deposed and a minor placed on the throne.[2]

However, Northbrook refused to take such arbitrary action. Since the witnesses had not been cross-examined and the Gaikwar had not been given any opportunity of defending himself, Northbrook maintained that "it was out of the question to assume his guilt without further investigation."[3] Before making any decision he summoned Souter to Calcutta with the papers on the case. There the evidence was examined by the Government's legal advisers who concluded that there were sufficient grounds for committing the Gaikwar to trial on a charge of complicity.[4] Northbrook and the Council also thoroughly studied the evidence. "Our principal anxiety," he wrote, "was to examine very carefully the possibility ... that there might be a conspiracy against the Gaekwar, and that the evidence was cooked, either by the assumed authors of the conspiracy against him, or by the police."[5] At first Northbrook

---

[1]Scoble to Pelly, 5 Jan. 1875, ibid., No. 196, (Jan.).
[2]Pelly to Indian Govt., 7 Jan. 1875, ibid., No. 195, (Jan.).
[3]N. to Pelly, 13 Jan. 1875, N.P., vol. 17.
[4]Opinion of legal officers, 13 Jan. 1875, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 199, (Jan.).
[5]N. to Salisbury, 14 Jan. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.

thought it improbable that the Gaikwar "should have been in personal communication with persons of the class of Residency servants" or that he should have attempted to take Phayre's life at a time when he was still awaiting a reply to the request for his removal. However, the evidence on the former point was strong, and Northbrook considered that the "apparent inconsistency" of the second was explained by the fact that the letter asking for Phayre's removal originated with Naoroji and that, before it was written, the Gaikwar had already taken more drastic measures to get rid of him.[1] Moreover, Northbrook and the Council were unable to find evidence of police tampering with witnesses or to discover any plausible case for a conspiracy against the Gaikwar. "If the poisoning had been a conspiracy by the enemies of the Gaekwar," Northbrook believed, "the conspirators would have ... taken immediate steps to carry out their object by causing a charge to be made against the Gaekwar [when Phayre opened investigations in November]."[2] They evidently did not consider the possibility that Phayre might himself have planned the affair in order to discredit the Gaikwar for they undoubtedly believed in his personal integrity and probably thought it unquestionable that a British officer would have done such a thing.

---

[1]The confessions of Raoji and Narsu indicated that arrangements for the poisoning had been made some time beforehand.

[2]N. to Salisbury, 14 Jan. 1875, loc. cit.

Convinced that there was a "strong suspicion of the Gaekwar's complicity" in the crime, the Indian Government decided to conduct an official inquiry into the case.[1] It considered that evidence might be destroyed and the inquiry thwarted if the Gaikwar remained on the throne, and therefore decided to remove him from power pending the results. Since the Naoroji Ministry had resigned, the Indian Government had little choice but to assume full control of Baroda administration for the time being. This it did by delegating to Pelly full powers of government.

Northbrook was particularly anxious not to alarm the other princes or the public in Baroda or elsewhere. Since the news that the Gaikwar was suspected of being connected with the poisoning attempt had become public late in December some Anglo-Indian newspapers had been advocating extreme measures. The Bombay Gazette, for example, confidently asserted that if the Gaikwar were proved guilty he would be "sent to end his days at the Andamans" and fervently hoped that the Government would annex Baroda.[2] Such views undoubtedly caused considerable alarm at Baroda as well as in other parts of India, and it was partly to allay these fears that, in its proclamation announcing the inquiry, the Government pledged that its administration of

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 15 Jan. 1875, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 211, (Jan.).

[2]Editorial, 29 Dec. 1874.

the state would be temporary and that "a native administration" would be re-established after the conclusion of the inquiry.[1]

The atmosphere at the capital was tense on the day of the Gaikwar's arrest, but no disturbances occurred, thanks largely no doubt to the presence of a strong body of British troops brought in at Pelly's urgent request. Just before the Gaikwar's arrest on the morning of 14 January the British troops took command of all important and strategic places within the city. However, the Gaikwar's forces did not try to prevent the arrest of their Chief and were not even disarmed. The danger of disorder was also reduced by Pelly's efforts to get all classes of the community to acquiese in the Government's decision. That afternoon he invited the principal sirdars and military officers, the leaders of the commercial community, and the heads of agricultural classes to the Residency where he carefully explained the Government's proclamation, reassuring them in particular that their fears of annexation were groundless.[2] The following day the British troops handed over the protection of the city and palaces to the police and the Gaikwar's force. Although the normal business life of the community was quickly resumed,

---

[1]Proclamation, 13 Jan. 1875, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 202, (Jan.).

[2]Pelly to Indian Govt. and enc., 20 Jan. 1875, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, Nos. 68 and 69, (Mar.).

the British reinforcements were retained at the capital as a precautionary measure.

Anxious that justice should be done and that it should be seen to be done, Northbrook resolved upon the unprecedented procedure of holding a public inquiry into the charges against the Gaikwar. Informed Indian opinion, particularly in Bombay and Baroda, strongly advocated the establishment of a mixed commission and Northbrook, who had appointed an Indian on the earlier commission, agreed that this would add confidence in its impartiality. He therefore obtained the services of Sir Dinkar Rao, the Indian statesman who, in his opinion, commanded "the greatest confidence".[1] Dinkar Rao strongly urged the expediency of associating some of the princes in the inquiry and on his advice Northbrook invited Maharajas Sindia, Holkar, and Jaipur to join the commission. Holkar declined for personal and domestic reasons but to Northbrook's surprise Sindia and Jaipur accepted. He was, however, pleased by their decision. "This is a great political advantage," he wrote, "for it shows the cordial acceptance on the part of two of the principal Native Princes of the position taken by the Government of India, and will, I feel sure, have an excellent effect."[2] To head the commission, Northbrook selected Sir Richard Couch, the Chief

---

[1] N. to Salisbury, 22 Jan. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2] N. to Salisbury, 29 Jan. 1875, ibid.

Justice of Bengal and the highest judicial authority in India. The other commissioners appointed were Meade, chairman of the earlier inquiry, and Philip Melvill, a judge from the Punjab who was familiar with the languages of western India.

Northbrook did not intend the commission to act as a court of justice for he regarded the case as a political rather than a legal one.[1] The alleged crime was serious chiefly because it indicated hostility and disloyalty towards the Crown. Because of the political nature of the case, the final decision on the Gaikwar's fate was to rest with the Indian Government though it was intended that its decision should be guided by the commission's findings.

In a proclamation issued in mid-February the Government outlined its instructions to the commission.[2] It was not to take evidence concerning the Gaikwar's previous behaviour or his general administration but to confine its attention to four specific charges -- namely that he had held "secret communications for improper purposes" with some Residency servants; that he had bribed them; that his object had been to get the servants to spy on Phayre and injure him; and that an attempt to poison Phayre had been made by persons whom he had instigated. The commission opened its

---

[1]N. to Pelly, 5 and 29 Jan. 1875, ibid., vol. 17.
[2]Proclamation, [15 Feb. 1875], For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 147, (Mar.).

hearings at Baroda during the latter part of February.

Despite the political nature of the case, the method of conducting the inquiry resembled that followed in ordinary judicial cases. There was a counsel for the prosecution consisting of A. Scoble, the Advocate-General of Bombay, and four assistants. Serjeant Ballantine, who had come from England for the purpose and who was received in Baroda with much enthusiasm, was chief counsel for the defence. He was assisted by four Englishmen and two Indians. The witnesses were questioned by the prosecuting counsel and cross-examined by Ballantine. The Gaikwar was present at most of the hearings.

To outward appearances the commission proceeded smoothly with its task but there was considerable dissatisfaction on the part of the Indian commissioners. After the first day's hearings Sindia complained that the detailed public investigation into the Gaikwar's behaviour would indirectly defame the princes generally. He objected to continuing the proceedings and appealed to Pelly for a private interview with Malhar Rao so that he could recommend him to abdicate immediately.[1] Dinkar Rao, who had earlier informed Northbrook that he thought the Gaikwar was probably guilty,[2] evidently shared Sindia's views.[3] However, the Government

---

[1]Telegram, Pelly to Indian Govt., 25 Feb. 1875, ibid., No. 216, (Mar.).
[2]N. to Salisbury, 22 Jan. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[3]Pelly to N., 5 Mar. 1875, ibid., vol. 17.

refused Sindia's request and the proceedings continued, probably much to his dissatisfaction. Dinkar Rao also showed increasing signs of discontent, perhaps caused partly by the refusal of the Government to give an assurance that he might be appointed Diwan following the restoration of 'native rule'.[1]

Meanwhile, the case was going far from unfavourably to the Gaikwar for under Ballantine's searching cross-examination of witnesses many weaknesses were revealed in the evidence.[2] While it was conclusively established that the Gaikwar had been in communication with the Residency servants and had on occasions given them gifts, the evidence on the other charges was far from foolproof. Even the evidence of the three principal witnesses, Raoji, the havildar, Narsu, the jemadar, and Damodar Pant, the Gaikwar's private secretary,[3] did not agree on all points.

Ballantine rested the case for the defence on the inconsistencies in the evidence. In an able speech summing up his case he maintained that since the three chief

---

[1]Telegrams, Pelly to Baring, and vice versa, 11 and 15 Mar. 1875, Salisbury P., Baring series.

[2]Proc. of commission, 23 Feb.-18 Mar. 1875, printed in The Trial and Deposition of Mulhar Rao, Gaekwar of Baroda, pp. 7-210.

[3]Unlike the other two, Damodar Pant had been free until after the Gaikwar's arrest but was apprehended a few hours later while trying to escape from the capital. About two weeks later, and on confession of pardon, he stated that he had bought arsenic and diamond dust for the Gaikwar at whose directions he had passed it on to others who were to give it to the Residency servants.

witnesses were themselves accomplices in the crime their evidence could not be relied on. He pointed out that neither of them had confessed before being taken into custody, that two of them had done so only on promise of pardon, and that it was possible that Damodar Pant had known the substance of the other confessions before he was arrested. He suggested that the latter, who was suspected of dishonesty in handling the Gaikwar's private finances, might have feared that Phayre would force his dismissal. Ballantine therefore maintained that Damodar might have tried to poison Phayre on his own initiative. He also referred to the weaknesses in Phayre's evidence. For example, Phayre had claimed that attempts had been made to poison him on 6 and 7 November as well as on the 9 and that he had experienced similar feelings of dizziness on each of these days, but no evidence could be found that poison had been placed in his sherbet on the first two days. In fact, during the cross-examination, Ballantine had taken much of the weight out of Phayre's evidence by getting him to admit, after much questioning, that an Indian named Bhao Panikar had been regularly bringing him secret information on activities at the Gaikwar's Court. Ballantine also emphasized that there had been ample opportunities for police tampering with witnesses. He was undoubtedly convinced that the evidence was sufficiently conflicting to ensure a decision of not guilty as far as

the main charges against the Gaikwar were concerned.

Scoble, in his speech for the prosecution, admitted the discrepancies in the evidence but contended that it remained strong on all important points. He did not agree that because the principal witnesses were accomplices their evidence could not be trusted, but considered that all those examined before the commission had "substantially spoken the truth."[1] He did not think that Damodar Pant had known of the earlier confessions or that he had sufficient motive for the crime. He emphasized that there was no proof of police intimidation of witnesses and considered them above suspicion. He pointed out that the defence counsel had not brought forward a single witness to attest the Gaikwar's innocence and, in view of all the evidence against him, was confident that the commission would find the "four charges against His Highness amply proved."[2]

However, after carefully studying the evidence, the commission was unable to agree on a verdict. The three English commissioners agreed with the position taken by Scoble. "We are unable to find any sufficient reason," they wrote, "which would justify our declaring the Gaekwar not guilty of the offence imputed to him" and concluded that the four charges against him had been proved.[3] The

---

[1]Proc. of commission, op. cit., p. 209.
[2]Ibid., p. 210.
[3]Report, 31 Mar. 1875, printed in ibid.

three Indian commissioners on the other hand largely agreed with the views expressed by Ballantine in his speech for the defence. They doubted the reliability of most of the evidence and suspected police intimidation of witnesses. They gave their verdicts in brief separate reports.[1] The Maharaja of Jaipur concluded that the Gaikwar was in no way implicated in the attempt on Phayre's life. Sindia and Dinkar Rao were less positive but stated that they were not convinced that the charges had been proved. There could be little doubt that if the case had been an ordinary criminal one, heard by an impartial jury, the verdict would have been similar to that of the Indian commissioners. In fact, although they had reached the opposite verdict, the English commissioners considered their case far from strong as shown by a private letter which Meade wrote at the time:

> ... We [the English members] all felt that nothing could be worse than the character of the witnesses on whose depositions we were compelled to rely ...
>
> The whole ... question hung on the honesty or otherwise of the action of the police in connection with these witnesses, and this was the point which became one of irreconcilable difference between us and our Native colleagues.
>
> The latter refused absolutely to trust to police action in such a case, and to pronounce the Gaekwar guilty on the evidence of shameless criminals, two of whom had been promised pardon on condition of their confessing ...
>
> We fully felt this difficulty, and regretted the course taken with some of these witnesses, as for instance (1) their depositions not being taken down

---

[1] Reports, 27 Mar. 1875, ibid.

> at once when tendered; (2) their being then, after some delay, taken by Mr. Souter instead of a magistrate; (3) their being recorded in English instead of the language in which they were actually delivered.[1]

Indeed, it was probable that had the case been a purely criminal one and involved no political considerations the English commissioners would have returned a verdict of not guilty.

Northbrook was now faced with the unenviable task of deciding the Gaikwar's fate -- a task made more difficult by the widespread public excitement over the case. When the news that the Gaikwar was suspected of the poisoning attempt had first become public, little sympathy was expressed for him in the Indian press but, with his arrest and later with the daily publication throughout the country of the proceedings of the commission, support for him became increasingly strong. To some extent this was a reaction to the extremely hostile views expressed by some sections of the Anglo-Indian press, notably the Bombay Gazette and the Englishman both of which maintained from the beginning that the conviction and deposition of Malhar Rao was a foregone conclusion while the former advocated annexation.[2] However, there were other reasons, too, behind the growing support for the Gaikwar as shown by the following comment of the Hindoo Patriot:

---

[1]Meade to N., 1 Apr. 1875, N.P., Family collection.
[2]Editorials, 1 Jan. and 17 Feb. 1875 respectively.

> The Gaekwar is a Maharatta prince, and the Maharattas naturally feel interested in his future. The orientals are peculiarly attached to their superiors ... [and have] an instinctive pity for fallen greatness. ... In the Gaekwar's case there is another powerful motive operating in the breasts of the Maharattas ... Under the British Government the native has not a fitting career. ... The Maharattas find in Baroda an open field for employment, and they are not without dread that if the British take possession of the State they will be shut out of this field. ... The interest which the educated natives take in the Baroda question is intellectual and moral. ... It is not that they have any personal sympathy with the Gaekwar -- so far as he is individually concerned they only wish that full justice should be done to him -- but they do sympathize with the State of Baroda and desire that it should be maintained inviolate. They do not certainly palliate ... oppression when it is committed by a native prince; but they do not share the vulgar European belief that Native princes are monsters in human form.[1]

As soon as Phayre's strong enmity towards the Gaikwar became known, some vernacular newspapers suggested that he himself had planned the entire poisoning affair to ruin the Gaikwar. For example, even before the inquiry had begun, the Akhbar-i-Alam, an Urdu newspaper published in Meerut, maintained that it was "not at all out of place ... to suspect" Phayre of administering the poison and suggested that he was "the real criminal ... and not the Maharaja."[2] As the inquiry proceeded and the weaknesses in the evidence were revealed by Ballantine's cross-examination of witnesses, many educated Indians leaned towards this view, unsupported though it was by any

---

[1]Editorial, 8 Mar. 1875.
[2]Editorial, 11 Feb. 1875, North-Western Provinces Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 13 Feb. 1875.

evidence. National feelings were aroused and there was some seditious article writing, notably in the Amrita Bazar Patrika and Mookerjee's Magazine, a periodical published in Calcutta. "Considering the unnatural relation that subsists between the English and the tributary Princes," the former wrote in an article blaming Phayre for the difficulties at Baroda, "it is rather strange that poisoning cases have been so few."[1] The article in the latter, believed to have been written by the editor, Babu Chandra Mukerji, was more serious still for it expressed regret that the country had reached such a "sad pass" that an important Maratha ruler could be arrested "without the necessity of firing a shot".[2] It maintained that it would have been "better for Baroda and for Native India, in general," if the Gaikwar had not "preferred life to honor" but had sacrificed himself by an "appeal to arms".[3] But these were extreme views and on the whole there was little seditious writing. However, the Indian press voiced increasingly strong support for the Gaikwar and was virtually unanimous in concluding that the charges against him were not proved and in demanding that he should be replaced on the throne. These views were particularly strong in the heart of the Maratha country as shown by a

---

[1]Editorial, 14 Jan. 1875, printed in Temple P., vol. 214.
[2]"The Baroda Coup d' Etat", Mookerjee's Magazine, Mar. - May 1875, p. 93.
[3]Ibid., p. 130.

petition sent to Northbrook following a public meeting in Poona. It claimed that "on no previous occasion" had "the masses of the people been so deeply moved."[1] "In the great religious centres," it continued, "large crowds went in processions to the temples, and prayed for ... Mulharrao's release; in many places also Brahmins and Shravak priests fasted, and prayed, and observed all the self-denying austerities prescribed on occasions of great national calamities." The memorialists appealed to Northbrook to temper "justice with the prerogative of mercy" and restore Malhar Rao to the throne.

Considerable support for the Gaikwar, coupled with increasing criticism of the Government's policy, was also expressed in the British press, particularly in the Times, which from the first had been sceptical about the temporary deposition of the Gaikwar and the holding of a public inquiry. It maintained that to accuse a reigning prince of attempting to poison a British representative was a step of "the gravest responsibility" and warned that a conviction could only be secured by the superiority of British force.[2] After receiving reports of much of the evidence taken at the inquiry and learning by telegraph of the commission's divided report, it bitterly denounced

---

[1]Memorial of Poona Inhabitants, 21 Mar. 1875, N.P., Family collection.

[2]Editorial, 15 Jan. 1875.

the Government's policy. It considered that its case had "throughly crumpled up ... under the withering scrutiny of ... Ballantine."[1] That the Government, acting on a little 'native' evidence and Phayre's suspicions, "should have incurred the risks of a State Prosecution," it wrote, "is probably the greatest and most mischievous blunder that has discredited our Indian policy since the Mutiny."[2] It believed that "no English Jury would dream of returning a verdict of guilty upon such evidence" and advocated that the Gaikwar be reinstated in power.[3]

Northbrook was deeply concerned over the attitude of the press and the growing sympathy for the Gaikwar. He was critical of the Anglo-Indian newspapers which "openly advocated ... annexation", thereby arousing apprehension among the princes and the educated classes.[4] But he was even more annoyed by the attacks of the Times, since these were given wide publicity throughout India and in his opinion "encouraged the seditious and discouraged the loyal."[5] He was convinced that the "injudicious writings of the English Press, both in India and at Home" largely accounted for the increasingly hostile tone of the Indian newspapers and consequently did not condemn them as sharply. He agreed that some of their articles were

---

[1]Editorial, 3 Apr. 1875. [2]Ibid.
[3]Editorial, 6 Apr. 1875.
[4]Memo., 8 Apr. 1875, N.P., Family collection.
[5]Ibid; and N. to Salisbury, 14 June 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

"highly improper" but did not think "even the worst of them worth prosecuting", partly because that would only add to the "public excitement".[1] He was anxious however about public feeling in western India and requested confidential reports from experienced officials there. T.C. Hope, the Collector of Surat, replied that "the natives generally -- the Hindoos almost to a man -- [might] be reckoned in [the Gaikwar's] favor", and suggested that "the chief means of security" for the future lay in playing off the Gujarats against the Marathas.[2] Similar views were expressed by Meade who maintained that there was strong feeling for the Gaikwar not only among the Brahmans and princes but in the community generally.

> ... Popular native feeling accords with the view of the Native Members of the Commission, and ... might be summed up in a remark of Sir Dinkur Rao's to me, thrice-repeated, that the Gaekwar's conviction on the poisoning charge would be 'an act of high-handed tyranny'.[3]

These views confirmed Northbrook's growing apprehension of the gravity of the situation and whereas he had earlier thought the feeling for the Gaikwar was "mainly confined to [the] half-educated class"[4] -- those with a smattering of English -- he now realized that "a strong feeling of nationality [had been aroused] among the Mahratta

---

[1] N. to Salisbury, 1 Apr. 1875, ibid.
[2] Hope to Baring, 17 Mar. 1875, ibid., vol. 17.
[3] Meade to N., 1 Apr. 1875, ibid., Family collection.
[4] N. to Salisbury, 26 Feb. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

population, and that the more able and better educated of them had all their sympathies enlisted in favor of the Gaekwar and against the British Government."[1]

It was therefore in an atmosphere of tension that the Indian Government met to decide the Gaikwar's fate. Because of the importance of the question Northbrook summoned all the members of the Executive Council to Simla. After spending several days "carefully examining the evidence ... point by point",[2] they unanimously concluded that the Gaikwar was guilty. "There was no shade of doubt in the mind of any of us," Northbrook wrote, "as to the correctness of the view taken by the Chief Justice and the English Commissioners that the guilt of the Gaekwar has been proved."[3] The Government acknowledged that the evidence was not foolproof but considered that it was not obliged "to give the accused the benefit of the doubt, as would have been the case in an ordinary criminal trial."[4] The case was primarily a political one and the Government emphasized that even if it could "honestly concur" in the views of the Indian commissioners "there would still remain the most grave suspicion attached to Mulhar Rao, which, coupled with his previous character ... would make

---

[1]Memo., N., 8 Apr. 1875, loc. cit.
[2]N. to Couch, 21 Apr. 1875, ibid., vol. 17.
[3]N. to Salisbury, 15 Apr. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.
[4]Indian Govt. to S.S., 22 Apr. 1875, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 775, No. 225, (July).

it impossible to replace him in power."[1] "We think," Northbrook declared, "that to restore Mulhar Rao to power under any conditions would be a miscarriage of justice and a fatal political error [for] it would seriously weaken the authority of the British Government in India and the position of British Residents at Native Courts."[2] The Government unanimously recommended that Malhar Rao and "his issue" should be deposed; that Jumna Bai, the wife of the former Gaikwar, should be allowed to adopt an heir to the throne; and that the administration should be placed in the hands of Sir Madhava Rao, a capable Indian statesman, who had agreed to serve as Diwan.[3] It was extremely anxious that its proposals should be sanctioned by the home Government and in submitting them to Salisbury, Northbrook declared:

> We earnestly trust that our recommendations may be accepted in their entirety, and we are of opinion that any modification of them may produce mischievous consequences.[4]

In Britain, where leading officials had been following the case with growing anxiety, opinion was sharply divided between the India Council and the Government. Even before receiving Northbrook's recommendations the Council,

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 15 Apr. 1875, ibid., No. 217, (July).

[2]Telegram, N. to Salisbury, 13 Apr. 1875, ibid., No. 203, (July).

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid.

according to a confidential report of Erskine Perry, one of its leading members, had decided that "if the Viceroy, on reading the evidence and the reasoned opinions of the Commissioners, came to the clear conclusion that the Gaekwar was guilty, it was his clear duty -- it was the only policy that would not leave the Government of India ridiculous in the eyes of the Natives -- to depose him at once."[1] Consequently, when it learned of his recommendations, the Council approved them. Salisbury, on the other hand, thought that, in view of the divided report of the commission, the deposition of the Gaikwar would be "a strong step", and that it might "raise an outcry in England".[2] Because of the importance of the question he referred it to the Cabinet. In Britain the commission of inquiry had been regarded as an ordinary criminal trial and the Cabinet strongly objected to deposing the Gaikwar on the basis of a divided report. Influenced no doubt by the extremely hostile criticism of the Times and apprehensive of a Parliamentary attack, many ministers opposed the policy recommended by the Indian Government.[3] According to Salisbury they "had no sympathy with Mulhar Rao" and thought that deposition was "possibly right in policy"

---

[1]Perry to N., 16 Apr. 1875, N.P., vol. 23.
[2]Salisbury to Disraeli, 13 Apr. 1875, Disraeli P., B/XX/Ce/36.
[3]Salisbury to Lytton, 13 Mar. 1876, Lytton P., vol. 516/1.

but objected to the Government's recommendations mainly because they were "very hard to defend in argument."[1] However, in view of Northbrook's urgent plea for the acceptance of his proposals, the Cabinet agreed to the Gaikwar's deposition, not because he was guilty of attempting to poison the Resident but as "an act of political necessity, on the ground of his unfitness to govern and the bad moral effect of restoring him."[2] "It must not in any way," Salisbury warned Northbrook, "be based in your Proclamation on the inquiry or report of ... Couch's Commission."[3] Salisbury stated that some members of the Cabinet had serious misgivings over the deposition and emphasized that he expected these instructions to be observed.

Northbrook deeply regretted the Cabinet's decision for he realized that the removal of the Gaikwar on the grounds of maladministration would be a breach of the Government's earlier pledge giving him until December 1875 to introduce reforms and would make the inquiry into the poisoning attempt look like a farce.[4] But Salisbury's "orders were so positive" that he felt "bound to follow them".[5] He was convinced that "there was no use making a

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 16 Apr. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2]Telegram, Salisbury to N., 15 Apr. 1875, ibid., Family collection.
[3]Ibid.
[4]N. to Salisbury, 21 Apr. and 21 June 1875, ibid., vol. 12.
[5]N. to Mallet, 21 June 1875, ibid., vol. 23.

further representation". Consequently the Indian Government immediately issued a proclamation announcing the deposition of Malhar Rao on the grounds of "his notorious misconduct, his gross misgovernment ..., and his evident incapacity to carry into effect the necessary reforms."[1] The proclamation stated that Jumna Bai would adopt a member of the ruling family whom the Indian Government was to select "as the most suitable person upon whom to confer ... Sovereignty." It announced that Madhava Rao would at once take over the administration, thereby bringing to an end the direct rule of the Governor-General's Agent. Finally, the proclamation stated that there would be no alteration in the treaty engagements with Baroda.

The deposition of the Gaikwar was bitterly attacked in Britain and India, and, as Northbrook had anticipated, the Government was severely criticized for doing so on the grounds of maladministration. The Times refused to believe that the Government's decision was not influenced by the poisoning case and was particularly outspoken in its comments:

> Everyone knows that the reason why Mulhar Rao's restoration has been decided to be 'detrimental' is that he has been tried on charges which have not been proved, and has been pronounced innocent of the gravest accusations by Judges of his own race. Is it possible to allege that the results of the Commission had no

---

[1]Proclamation, 19 Apr. 1875, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 775, No. 221, (July).

> influence upon the Government? But, if it did influence it, the consistency of Lord Northbrook is seriously discredited by his attempt to justify his present resolution on charges which he held to be sufficiently punished a few months ago by a warning rebuke and a conditional sentence.[1]

It admitted that Northbrook's Baroda policy was neither "aggressive or rapacious" but denounced him for "deficient courage". It maintained that of the courses open to him the "boldest" would have been "to uphold the opinion of the three European members of the Commission ... that the crime had been established."[2] London's leading Liberal newspaper, the Daily News, was also critical. It considered that the Gaikwar's "punishment after a virtual acquittal" was an act which "must wear an equivocal aspect" and was mystified why the Government should have prosecuted him if it had determined to depose him for maladministration.[3]

In India the reaction was even more hostile. The Hindoo Patriot, while praising the Government's arrangements for the future administration of Baroda, argued that the reasons given for the Gaikwar's removal were "strangely inconsistent".[4] "This decree," it wrote, "amounts to a confession of error in the appointment of the Commission to enquire into the charge of poisoning, and points as it were to a foregone conclusion." Sharper criticism was

---

[1]Editorial, 26 Apr. 1875.
[2]Editorial, 24 Apr. 1875.
[3]Editorial, 24 Apr. 1875.
[4]Editorial, 26 Apr. 1875.

expressed in the vernacular press. For example, Laud-i-Mahfuz, an Urdu newspaper published in upper India, remarked:

> ... The prophecy made by some people at the outset of the Baroda agitation, that the Maharaja's fate was sealed, and that the appointment of a commission of inquiry was a hoax and a mere show to deceive the Hindustanis, has proved but too true.
> ... The high-handed policy now pursued has had the effect of extinguishing the good will ... between the Government and the people of India, which Her Majesty's proclamation of 1857 [sic] had fostered.[1]

The influential Delhi weekly, Sadadarsha, was equally critical:

> Lord Northbrook's Baroda policy has been singularly weak and inconsistent, not to say unfair and unjust ... He tried the Maharaja on one charge and condemned him on quite another. ...
> The Government ... should in future make it a point always to avoid a hypocritical parade of justice and fair dealing, when it is not prepared to give the substance.[2]

Similar views were expressed by the vernacular press throughout India.

Feelings against the Government's policy ran particularly high in Baroda. It was true that Malhar Rao's removal from the state was achieved without incident, but that was largely attributable to the secrecy surrounding it and to the presence of strong British forces. Meade, who had recently replaced Pelly as Governor-General's

---

[1]Editorial, 30 Apr. 1875, North-Western Provinces Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 8 May 1875.
[2]Editorial, 14 June 1875, ibid., 19 June 1875.

Agent,[1] informed Malhar Rao on the afternoon before the proclamation was published that he was to be deposed. That evening he was secretly placed aboard a special train which took him to the Madras presidency where he was to be detained. But the Government's delay in announcing a successor and the continuing press agitation led to mounting tension in the capital. On 28 April, six days after the Gaikwar's deposition, shopkeepers began closing their stores saying that they would transact no business until there was a ruler on the throne.[2] When the police tried to prevent this, they were attacked by a mob which overpowered them and rushed to the palace. Joined by the guards there the mob entered the palace, placed Lakshmi Bai's baby son on the throne, and declared him Gaikwar. After that some of the rioters sacked the house of Damodar Pant. Meade reported that for a time "the alarm occasioned by the disturbance ... was ... very great", but with the swift appearance on the scene of a strong body of British troops the rioters quickly dispersed.[3] The troops took control of the city and reoccupied the palace without bloodshed. The next day all was quiet in the capital and business was resumed as usual. To avoid further demonstrations in favour of Lakshmi Bai's son, Meade sent him

---

[1]Pelly retired because of ill-health.
[2]Times of India, 3 May 1875.
[3]Meade to N., 30 Apr. 1875, N.P., vol. 17.

and his mother to join Malhar Rao in Madras. The arrival of Jumna Bai and Sir Madhava Rao in Baroda a few days later did much to restore public confidence. The new Diwan at once took charge of the administration and continued the work of reform already in progress. No further disturbances occurred at Baroda and though rumours spread of disaffection in the Bombay Army investigation revealed, much to Northbrook's relief, that they were unfounded. The Indian press, however, remained critical.

Northbrook realized that the deposition would have been criticized regardless of the grounds on which it was based, but he resented being accused of a breach of faith and insincerity over the establishment of the commission -- accusations which he believed would have been avoided if the Cabinet had not overruled his recommendations.[1] He was naturally anxious to defend his Government from what he considered to be unfair abuse. Moreover, though he had agreed not to base the deposition on the grounds that the Gaikwar was guilty of the poisoning attempt, he believed that, since his Government "never intended the Commission to be a judicial tribunal" whose opinion it was "bound to accept", it would have been abdicating its "proper functions" not to express its views on the case.[2]

---

[1] N. to Halifax, 10 May 1875, ibid., vol. 23.
[2] N. to Salisbury, 29 Apr. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

"I should have been ashamed," Northbrook stated, "to have shrunk from expressing an opinion."[1] At his instructions Hobhouse drew up a resolution carefully examining the main points in the reports of the commissioners. The resolution, which largely confirmed the arguments of the English members, concluded by declaring that in the Government's opinion "all the offences imputed to the Gaekwar" had been sustained and that he had instigated "Raoji and Nursoo to ... poison ... Phayre."[2] This resolution was published by the Indian Government shortly after Malhar Rao's removal. Northbrook also wished to publish a resolution summarizing his Baroda policy and acknowledging that while the Cabinet had accepted most of his recommendations it had directed that Malhar Rao's removal "should not be based upon the enquiry and report of the Commission, but upon general grounds."[3] However, Salisbury strongly advised against "alluding to differences of opinion"[4] -- perhaps because he feared it might lead to criticism of the home Government's part in the proceedings. He also regretted that the Indian Government had publicly expressed its "opinion on the truth of the charge of poisoning."[5]

---

[1]N. to Perry, 10 May 1875, ibid., vol. 23.
[2]Resolution, 21 Apr. 1875, printed in The Trial and Deposition of Mulhar Rao, pp. 211-20.
[3]Telegram, N. to Salisbury, 23 Apr. 1875, N.P., Family collection.
[4]Telegram, Salisbury to N., 23 Apr. 1875, ibid.
[5]Salisbury to N., 21 May 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

Northbrook therefore abstained from publishing a defence of his Baroda policy though he regretted that his Government should have to bear the blame for deposing the Gaikwar on the grounds of maladministration.[1] Instead, he wrote a lengthy minute carefully explaining each important development in his Baroda policy and frankly admitting the differences over the grounds for deposition.[2] He hoped that this minute and the official correspondence from the Indian Government would be presented to Parliament if the subject were debated there. More than a month passed however before the Baroda correspondence was published in Parliamentary Papers.

As more information on Northbrook's policy became known, criticism of it declined sharply especially in Britain. The Times still maintained that the policy was not "sagacious or far-sighted", but declared that the arguments of the English commissioners were far more convincing than those of the Indians and that no "real injustice" had been done.[3] The Standard, a Conservative newspaper, argued that when "the Indian Government had formed so strong an opinion of the Guicowar's guilt", his restoration would have destroyed its "moral authority" and

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 29 Apr. 1875, ibid.
[2]Minute, N., 29 Apr. 1875, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 775, No. 296, (July).
[3]Editorials, 17 May and 14 June 1875.

encouraged "other native Princes to act in opposition to it."[1] Similar views were expressed by the Daily News which maintained that the deposition was fully justified.[2] This change of attitude was also reflected in official circles. Lord George Hamilton, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for India, admitted that he thought the reasons for the deposition advanced by the Indian Government were "more logical and straightforward" than those imposed by the Cabinet.[3] After reading the reports of the commission Salisbury confessed that "the mere fact that Mulhar Rao has so conducted himself as to be held guilty of poisoning by three highly competent European Judges was of itself enough to declare him unfit for sovereignty."[4] He was convinced that "substantial justice" had been done to the people of Baroda and regretted that Malhar Rao had "got off so cheap".[5] In his official despatch reviewing the Baroda episode he suggested that the Government had made a mistake in placing Indians on the commission and holding the inquiry in public but otherwise expressed support for its general policy.[6] In fact, the change in attitude towards Northbrook's policy was so marked that a Parliament-

---

[1]Editorial, 17 May 1875.
[2]Editorial, 14 June 1875.
[3]Hamilton to N., 1 Oct. 1875, N.P., vol. 23.
[4]Salisbury to N., 21 May 1875, ibid., vol. 12.
[5]Salisbury to N., 22 May 1875, ibid.
[6]S.S. to Indian Govt., 3 June 1875, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 776, No. 168, (Aug.)

ary attack, which had been threatened by A.M. Sullivan, Liberal member for Louth County, never materialized.[1]

In India the educated classes remained convinced that the Indian Government had acted unjustly though hostility to its policy diminished considerably. The Hindoo Patriot maintained that the majority of the public did not accept Northbrook's conclusion that the Gaikwar was guilty "as sound or consistent with the character of the evidence" but was even more critical of Salisbury, who, by ordering the deposition on general grounds, had laid himself open to a "charge of gross breach of faith", and had undermined "the prestige of the Government of India in the estimation of its princes and people."[2] It admitted that "substantial justice" had been done to the people of Baroda, but its final verdict was that the Government's policy had been "tortuous and inconsistent".[3] Its editor, Kristo Das Pal, expressed his views more candidly in a private letter:

> I don't for a moment hold that the fate which has overtaken Mulhar Rao was not richly deserved in the abstract, but I am sorry that the last act of the Baroda drama [deposition] has given him that sympathy which his antecedents and character would never have commanded. I don't agree with those who think the Commission was a mistake; it was a righteous move, which was not of course in unison with the traditions of despotic rule in this country. ... From the beginning I had said distinctly that the Commission was

---

[1]Telegram, Hamilton to N., 29 July 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2]Editorial, 3 May 1875.
[3]Editorial, 19 July 1875.

> not a judicial tribunal ... and that the Government had reserved to itself the right of passing its own verdict. But there being so much difference of opinion as to the character of the evidence, in my humble opinion it would have been better if the Gaekwar had been allowed to complete the term of probation granted to him. ... Personally I have no sympathy with the Gaekwar, but the principle involved is important, and deeply affects the good reputation of our Government.[1]

Except for the Marathas whose national feelings had been greatly aroused and for a minority of extremists in other parts of the country who were much more critical, these views were undoubtedly representative of the educated classes. There were indications, too, that some princes were not opposed to the decision. General Daly, the Governor-General's Agent in central India, reported that Holkar maintained that "deposition was essential, for the man was ... mad and foolish."[2] Northbrook claimed that even Sindia and Jaipur did "not doubt that we were right in deposing the Gaekwar."[3]

Hostility to Northbrook's policy would have been far more formidable and prolonged had he not shown by his measures for the future government of Baroda that he was not motivated by any desire to acquire territory or to establish an administration that was essentially British, but that his sole object was to ensure more efficient 'native rule'. From the first Northbrook had determined

---

[1]Pal to Baring, 4 May 1875, N.P., Family collection.
[2]Daly to N., 27 Apr. 1875, ibid.
[3]N. to Halifax, 28 June 1875, ibid., vol. 23.

"to place a really able and powerful Native Minister at the head of the Government."[1] He was therefore pleased at obtaining the services of Madhava Rao, whom he considered the best man available for the Diwanship. Northbrook was convinced that unless the Diwan was given a large measure of independence he would fail to gain the confidence of the Baroda subjects or to achieve reforms. He therefore instructed Meade to confine his interference to indicating the general nature of the more essential reforms. To help ensure that these instructions were observed, he decided that for the time being Baroda would remain under the jurisdiction of the central Government instead of being returned to the control of the Bombay Government which had seriously discredited itself by its handling of affairs during 1874. Northbrook advised Madhava Rao to carry out the reforms recommended by the 1873 commission but cautioned him against hasty reorganization of the administration along British lines.[2]

In a further effort to ensure a long term inprovement in the Baroda administration, Northbrook determined to select a child rather than an adult as the new Gaikwar. There were two merits in such a course. In the first place, a long minority would enable the Diwan, in co-operation with the Resident, to introduce reforms without

---

[1] N. to Pelly, 20 Feb. 1875, ibid., vol. 17.
[2] N. to Madhava Rao, 11 May 1875, ibid.

interference. Secondly, a young Gaikwar could be given a good education and special training for the eventual assumption of full power over the state. On Meade's recommendation, which was fully concurred in by the Diwan and Jumna Bai, the Government chose Gopal Rao, a promising ten year old youth belonging to a distant branch of the ruling family.[1] Plans were at once undertaken for his education. With the agreement of the Diwan, Meade secured the services of an English tutor and prepared a training programme similar to that being employed in Mysore where a young Maharaja was being educated to assume the rule of the state. The ceremonies of adoption and installation of the new Gaikwar, who assumed the name of Sayaji Rao, were held at Baroda around the end of May. Although the principal sirdars and other leaders of the community professed allegiance to the new prince, the atmosphere was not altogether serene. In July Meade reported that the latest of many rumours which had been circulating was that, after the monsoon, there was to be a general rising in Gujarat and the Deccan.[2] However, no disturbances occurred and later that year when the Prince of Wales visited Baroda as part of his tour of India not a single demonstration was made on behalf of Malhar Rao.[3] Indeed, his visit,

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 27 May 1875, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 775, No. 379, (July).
[2]Meade to N., 13 July 1875, N.P., vol. 17.
[3]Meade to N., 23 Nov. 1875, ibid.

which had been planned before the Baroda crisis arose, undoubtedly had a salutary effect on the princes generally who must have found the friendliness and the interest shown by the heir to the British throne reassuring.

The attitude of the subjects of Baroda towards the new regime soon changed from one of forced or grudging acquiescence to one of genuine support thanks largely to its reform programme. The difficulties which confronted Madhava Rao were at first, however, extremely formidable as shown by his remarks on the demoralized state of the administration.

> Misrule has ... been almost chronic in these territories; but it certainly culminated under the Ex-Maharaja. An utter extinction of a sense of responsibility to God and man, undisguised spoliation, tyranny of almost every kind and degree, boundless folly, reckless extravagance and intolerable venality, pervading all the departments of the State, exhibit their sad effect wherever we turn. Nothing can be worse than the utter decomposition amidst which the new administration has to work.[1]

Nevertheless, once he had succeeded in filling the important offices with the most competent men available, the ministry began to work as a team in introducing improvements. Immediate attention was given to the many unresolved grievances of the sirdars and military classes, the commercial community, and the ryots. Efforts were made to provide an equitable settlement of all complaints which

---

[1]Madhava Rao to Meade, 29 Sept. 1875, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 6, p. 682.

were found to be justified. At the same time the ministry began the work of thoroughly reorganizing the revenue and financial administration, of building up an efficient police force, of continuing the judicial improvements begun by Naoroji, of introducing a system of state public works, of establishing a medical service, and of extending education. In short, reforms were undertaken in every branch of government. Within five months of their taking office Meade reported that he was well satisfied with the improvements which had been achieved.[1] Progress was sustained during subsequent years and by the time Madhava Rao resigned the Diwanship nearly ten years later Baroda was prosperous and efficiently administered. The foundations which he laid down were built upon by Sayaji Rao. Under his enlightened and benevolent rule, which lasted until 1939, Baroda became one of the most progressive states in India. As far therefore as the result of Northbrook's policy was concerned, there was unanimous satisfaction with it, even on the part of nationalists who continued to regard the deposition as a high-handed act. "Looking upon the present successor of ... Malhar Row," the Bengalee wrote in 1904, "we cannot say that the deposition ... has not turned out to be a veritable blessing in disguise to the subjects of ... Baroda."[2]

---

[1]Meade to Indian Govt., 2 Oct. 1875, ibid., pp. 677-80.
[2]Editorial, 17 Nov. 1904.

There can be no question, however, that at the time Northbrook's deposition of the Gaikwar aroused deep resentment among the politically conscious section of the community and seriously undermined their confidence in him. Nor was their reaction and criticism altogether unwarranted. Northbrook himself admitted that considering the "many concurrent circumstances of doubt and difficulty ... -- the incapacity of the Residents at Baroda for many years -- Phayre's conduct -- the trouble with the Bombay Government -- the poisoning case -- the trial -- the agitation ... -- the division of opinion in the Commission -- the attitude of the English Press -- and, lastly, the difficulty of finding a successor to Malhar Rao" -- he was not "presumptous enough to suppose" that he had made no mistakes.[1] There can be little doubt that upon strictly judicial grounds the deposition was unjustified and that in refusing to give Malhar Rao the benefit of the doubt when the three Indian commissioners concluded that the charge was 'not proved', Northbrook acted inconsistently with his policy of placing them on the commission. However, the final decision was primarily a political one and the deposition was based less on the absolute certainty that he was guilty of the poisoning attempt than on the grave suspicion which rested on him as a result

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 28 June 1875, N.P., vol. 12.

of this case, coupled with his character and previous behaviour. Northbrook himself was convinced that Malhar Rao was implicated in the poisoning attempt and, despite the weaknesses of the evidence, perhaps he was right.[1] Moreover, while Northbrook's action may be criticized because of its serious political effect, the alternative might have been even worse. Had he restored Malhar Rao to power and then, finding that he failed to complete his probationary period satisfactorily, attempted to depose him, there would probably have been real trouble from the Marathas. It should be remembered, too, that most of the blame for the difficulties in the first place lay with the Bombay Government rather than with Northbrook. Had it kept him informed of Phayre's doings during August 1874, Northbrook would have removed him at once and the poisoning affair would never have arisen. Finally, the deposition would have evoked less criticism if the Cabinet had fully supported his recommendations instead of forcing him to

---

[1] Suspicion of Malhar Rao was enhanced by the evidence, given by some of those who were arrested in connection with the attempt on Phayre, that he had poisoned Bhao Sindia in 1872 and that later another Baroda subject, Govind Naik, had met a similar fate at his hands. /Pelly to Indian Govt., 13 Feb. 1875, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 774, No. 332, (Mar.)/. However, the truth of this evidence was not confirmed for the Government did not place on trial any of those who confessed to being connected with these cases, or with the attempt on Phayre, fearing that such a course would prolong public excitement. Those whom the Government considered to be the worst offenders were placed under detention in British territory or deported overseas.

base it upon general grounds. In view of these factors and the beneficial long term results of Northbrook's policy both in promoting good government at Baroda and establishing the precedent that the paramount power would not tolerate excessive misrule, the following tribute paid by Romanath Tagore in 1875 was not undeserved:

> Whatever differences of opinion may exist among certain classes of subjects, the end is in the main right ... The Gaekwar by nature, habits, training, and antecedents is entirely unfit to rule over a country and ... should never have been placed on the throne ... The Government of India has ... redeemed a sacred duty by freeing the subjects of Baroda from such a galling yoke. Whatever the present excitement, I feel confident that the people of Baroda will eventually bless His Lordship for his righteous decision.[1]

---

[1]Tagore to Baring, 20 May 1875, N.P., Family collection.

Chapter VI

THE TARIFF CONTROVERSY

The establishment of free trade in Britain had not led to any immediate attempt to bring India's customs laws into full conformity with these principles. The Indian Government's first four Financial Members, although they were convinced free-traders, had recognized that the need for revenue in India made the establishment of free trade impossible for the time being. In the early 1870's India still imposed tariffs on large numbers of imports as well as on many of its leading exports. The home Government had accepted this situation and had rarely interfered with the tariff policy decided upon by the Governor-General in Council or pressed unduly for special favours for particular British interests. However, in 1875 when Northbrook's Government revised the tariff in terms of what it considered to be India's interests and refused to grant important concessions to British cotton manufacturers, it ran into strong opposition from the Secretary of State. Salisbury maintained that the Indian tariff should conform to imperial interests and instructed Northbrook to remove the import duties on British cotton goods. Moreover, to ensure that imperial interests were henceforth protected, he ordered the Government not to pass any important legislation in future without previously consulting him.

Northbrook strongly objected to these instructions and completely disagreed with the principles underlying them. Few controversies between the Government of India and the Secretary of State were more intense, or of greater significance, than that which followed.

The tariff regulations in force when Northbrook came to India had been adopted in 1871. Though the rates of duty and the number of articles subject to them had been steadily reduced during the 1860's, the tariff schedule still contained many restrictions on trade. Under the act of 1871, fifty-four classified articles were liable to import duties.[1] The general rate of duty was 7½ percent, though there were variations, some below and a few above this rate. In addition, duties of 3 percent or more were imposed on many of India's leading exports. The duties, which were imposed solely to raise revenue, played an important part in maintaining the Government's financial stability. Customs revenue between 1871 and 1874 averaged £2.60 million a year.

Northbrook considered the tariff regulations unsatisfactory since they were so much at variance with the principles of free trade. Admittedly, the import duties were not imposed to give protection to Indian industry but to raise revenue. However, since duties were imposed

---

[1]Fin. Dept's. Account of Customs Duties, undated, Enc. to Fin. Letters from India, vol. 96, No. 17.

on imports of many goods which were also produced in the country, they gave slight protection to some industries. Northbrook was not disturbed by this feature of the tariff. The rates of duty were not high and he thought that the need for revenue more than justified this infringement upon the free trade principle. His chief objection to the tariff was that it imposed duties on so many of India's exports. These duties restricted the competitiveness of Indian goods in foreign markets and therefore hampered the growth of the country's trade -- growth which was vital for maintaining financial equilibrium. Some months after his arrival in India, Northbrook made one small step towards promoting exports. In response to a petition from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, he removed the export duty on wheat.[1] But he delayed undertaking larger reforms partly because he believed that the questions of direct taxation and salt duties demanded first consideration. Only after receiving complaints from officials and commercial associations in India and Britain did Northbrook authorize a re-examination of the entire tariff system.

The first representations of the need to revise the tariff regulations were made by officials of the Bengal Government. Early in 1873 the Collector of Customs at Calcutta suggested various changes in the regulations,

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 10 Jan. 1873, Fin. Dept. Proc., Sep. Rev., vol. 667, No. 20, (Feb.).

particularly in the valuations on which goods were taxed.[1] Most articles were charged at an ad valorem rate, fixed according to the market value of goods prevailing in the late 1860's. By 1873 the market value of many articles had increased, while that of others had declined. The Collector maintained, therefore, that the tariff valuations should be revised to correspond with current values. He suggested specific changes in the valuation of many articles on the import schedule. His proposals were submitted to Alonzo Money, member of the Board of Revenue of the Lower Provinces. Money did not agree with all the specific suggestions, but considered that there was "a great necessity for revising the tariff."[2] He recommended that the Government should set up a committee, comprised of representatives from India's leading ports, to revise the customs laws. However, the Indian Government rejected the proposal, stating that the tariff could not conveniently be amended at that time.[3] It gave no reason for this refusal, though Northbrook's desire to avoid any other important financial reform until the controversy over the abolition of the income-tax had subsided was probably the cause of the Government's inaction.

---

[1]Memo., J.A. Crawford, undated, ibid., No. 13, (Jan. 1875).

[2]Board of Rev. to Bengal Govt., 1 Apr. 1873, ibid., No. 13, (Jan. 1875).

[3]Resolution, Indian Govt., 6 June 1873, ibid., No. 14, (Jan. 1875).

Shortly afterward the Indian Government received a petition from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce urging the "expediency of revising the values on which duties are assessed ... as well as the rates of duty to which merchandise is now subject."[1] As a result of the growing support of Bengal official and commercial interests for a revision of the tariff regulations, the Government requested the other provincial administrations concerned with overseas trade to give their views on the subject. The Governments of Madras and Bombay and the Chief Commissioner of British Burma agreed that the regulations should be revised. The need for change was endorsed, too, by the Chambers of Commerce of Madras and Bombay. In short, there was considerable support for a thorough revision of the tariff laws.

The tariff was also criticized by the Lancashire cotton manufacturers. India was Lancashire's best customer both in terms of the quantity and value of the goods which it imported and early in 1874 the Manchester Chamber of Commerce protested to the Secretary of State over the injurious effect of India's cotton duties on the British textile trade. The Chamber had protested vigorously against the duty of 10 percent which the Government had imposed on cotton goods and yarn to help restore financial

---

[1]Bengal Chamber of Commerce to Indian Govt., 20 Aug. 1873, ibid., No. 17, (Jan. 1875).

stability after the Mutiny. Partly as a result of their protests, the Government in 1862 had reduced the duties to 5 percent and 3½ percent respectively.[1] Though the Chamber hoped that even these low duties would eventually be abolished, it raised little protest against them until 1874, an election year. Then it began an organized campaign against the duties, partly because it believed the valuations were unfair, but principally because it was worried by the growing strength of the cotton manufacturing industry in western India. In its petition to the Secretary of State it claimed that prices had declined to such an extent since the valuations were fixed in 1869 that the duties actually amounted to 4 percent on yarn and 6 percent on cloth. These taxes were so high, the Chamber declared, that they eliminated British competition in the coarse quality goods which the Indian mills produced. It realized that Indian raw cotton was unsuitable for the production of finer quality products of which the bulk of the British trade consisted. But it maintained that some Indian mills intended to import long staple raw cotton from Egypt and America. With this cotton, which could be imported duty-free, they would be able to produce fine textured goods to compete with duty-paying Lancashire goods. The Chamber alleged that a "protected trade in

---

[1] A. Redford, Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade, vol. 2, 1850-1939, p. 25.

cotton manufacture is now consequently springing up in British India" and maintained that this was "inconsistent with the commercial policy of this country and subversive of the soundest principles of political economy and free trade."[1] It called for an early consideration of the cotton duties "with a view to their abolition".

There was some basis for Manchester's concern over its Indian market. By the early 1870's a small but growing cotton manufacturing industry had been established in India. The first successful cotton mills had been established in the Bombay presidency in the 1850's. The industry received a great boost as a result of the economic boom in western India between 1860 and 1865. During that period seven new mills were built, bringing the total number up to ten.[2] There was a depression for the next few years and no new mills were established, but with returning prosperity toward the end of the decade the cotton industry expanded. By 1873 Indian capitalists had established fifteen mills in the city of Bombay and five in the mofussil. The Commissioner of Customs at Bombay estimated that these mills would produce 26.50 million pounds of yarn in 1874.[3] It was expected that

---

[1]Chamber of Commerce to S.S., 31 Jan. 1874, Fin. Dept, Proc., Sep. Rev., vol. 667, No. 24, (Jan. 1875).

[2]C.N. Vakil and others, Growth of Trade and Industry in modern India, p. 127.

[3]Report, 31 Jan. 1874, Fin. Dept. Proc., Sep. Rev., vol. 667, No. 11, (Jan. 1875).

about 45 percent of this quantity would be converted into cloth, the remainder being sold as yarn. As the Indian cotton industry expanded, Manchester's trade with Bombay in coarser quality products declined slightly. This is shown by the following figures provided by the Bombay Customs Office:[1]

Quantity and Value of Grey Piece-goods Imported into Bombay from Britain

Year	Quantity yds.	Value Rs.
1868-69	23,49,75,847	3,68,05,382
1869-70	22,61,91,103	2,97,38,207
1870-71	19,98,46,241	2,79,07,103
1871-72	21,34,02,753	2,87,13,002
1872-73	18,54,65,043	2,36,28,627

Quantity and Value of Yarn Imported into Bombay from Britain

Year	Quantity lbs.	Value Rs.
1868-69	69,62,456	66,03,677
1869-70	86,37,855	69,52,541
1870-71	1,04,43,301	85,78,113
1871-72	59,06,880	50,33,847
1872-73	67,06,120	55,19,385

From these figures there can be little doubt that the growth of the Indian industry had a somewhat adverse effect on Manchester's trade in coarse yarn and cloth. Yet, contrary to the claims of the Chamber of Commerce, it had not eliminated this trade. In fact the decline

---

[1] Ibid.

in this branch of the trade had occurred only in Bombay. Exports of this type of goods to Calcutta continued to grow. Nor had the growth of the local industry prevented the overall expansion of Manchester's trade with India. The great bulk of British cotton exports to India consisted of fine quality cloth and yarn not produced by the local mills and India continued to buy increasing quantities of these goods. The overall growth of Manchester's trade with India is shown in the following table:[1]

Year	Quantity of twist and yarn lbs.	Value of yarn & piece-goods £
1861-62		10,245,400
1862-63	19,493,879	9,630,530
1863-64	19,608,137	11,945,663
1871-72	28,853,890	17,483,334
1872-73	32,192,843	17,229,753
1873-74	30,947,634	17,781,341

As far as its total trade was concerned there was little reason for Manchester to be alarmed by the Indian cotton industry as it existed in the early 1870's.

Notwithstanding Manchester's claim that Indian mills were planning to produce fine quality yarns and fabrics there was little immediate prospect of this. The Indian industry was still in its infancy and few manufacturers had the resources to import long staple raw cotton from

---

[1]These figures are taken from Resolution, Indian Govt., 12 Aug. 1875, ibid., No. 26, (Aug.).

Egypt or America. Nor did they have the machinery or technical capability of producing finer fabrics. In 1873, therefore, the threat of India's competing with Manchester in fine quality products was more potential than real.

Manchester was wrong, too, in attributing the growth of the Indian cotton industry to the protection afforded by the import duties. The duties were too low to provide really effective protection. The manufacture of cotton increased not so much because of the slight protection afforded by the tariff but because India possessed certain natural advantages for the development of the industry. There were ample local supplies of raw cotton, labour was cheap, and there was a large home market. Undoubtedly it was because Manchester manufacturers realized this that they employed every effort to eliminate any artificial benefit, however slight, which the industry received from the tariff laws.

The petition from the Chamber of Commerce was presented to Argyll just before the Liberal defeat at the polls and he took no action on it. However, Salisbury sent it to the Indian Government shortly after he took office. At that time Salisbury had no decided views on the substance of the petition. He merely asked the Government to consider the questions raised "whenever the state of Indian

finance admits of remission of taxation."[1]

The Indian Government remained unmoved by these representations for tariff reform, probably because of the strain placed on the finances by the Bihar famine. It was unprepared to sacrifice its tariff revenue and held out no hope to Manchester for any relief of cotton duties. It ignored the Chamber's appeal for the abolition of the duties and even doubted whether a reduction in valuations was justified.[2] The Government intimated, however, that because of the many requests for the revision of the tariff it might convene a committee for that purpose in the winter of 1875.

The Manchester Chamber of Commerce was strongly dissatisfied with the Indian Government's reply. In a letter to the Under-Secretary of State for India, it pointed out that the revision of valuations was only an incidental consideration. Its great interest, it declared, was "the total and immediate repeal of the duties."[3] Salisbury forwarded the Chamber's letter to the Indian Government with a reminder that the subject demanded consideration.[4]

---

[1] S.S. to Indian Govt., 26 Mar. 1874, ibid., No. 23, (Jan. 1875).

[2] Indian Govt. to S.S., 15 May 1874, ibid., No. 25, (Jan. 1875).

[3] Chamber of Commerce to Under-S.S., 13 Aug. 1874, ibid., No. 28, (Jan. 1875).

[4] S.S. to Indian Govt., 8 Oct. 1874, ibid., No. 27, (Jan. 1875).

Further pressure for tariff revision came from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce which renewed its request for the revision of valuations and of the general rates of duty.[1]

The Government responded to these renewed protests against the customs regulations. The Bihar famine was now over and the Government's financial position was not so serious as to prevent tariff remissions. In November 1874 the Government announced the appointment of a committee to study the tariff.[2] Alonzo Money, one of the first officials to recommend a revision of the tariff, was appointed president. The members included one official each from Bombay and Madras and two from Bengal. There were two other European members representing the business community. The committee was instructed to examine the whole tariff system and to recommend any changes which it considered advisable and which did not entail a long term reduction in the revenue at present derived from customs duties. Because of the petitions from Manchester, the Government asked the committee to determine whether the import duties on cotton really had an injurious effect on Lancashire's trade with India. At the same time the Government reminded the committee that these duties were

---

[1]Bengal Chamber of Commerce to Indian Govt., 23 Sept. 1874, ibid., No. 26, (Jan. 1875).

[2]Resolution, Indian Govt., 25 Nov. 1874, ibid., No. 32, (Jan. 1875).

imposed to raise revenue and not to protect the local cotton industry. The tariff committee began its work early in January and submitted its report at the end of February.

The committee concluded that the existing duties were seriously restricting trade in certain articles. This was particularly true of exports. The committee found that exports of seeds, grains other than rice, and oils and spices had "made no advance during the past six years."[1] Most of these products encountered stiff competition in foreign markets. To place India's trade on a better footing, the majority of the committee recommended the abolition of all export duties on these products. They also proposed that the export duty of 3 percent on Indian manufactured cotton be removed. Much of this cotton was produced from Lancashire yarn on which an import duty had previously been paid. Moreover, even though the value of cotton manufactures exported from Bombay increased from Rs.5,16,721 in 1869 to Rs.10,85,808 in 1872, the duty undoubtedly restricted the competitiveness of these goods in overseas markets. In other articles subject to export duty -- rice, indigo, lac, and hides and skins -- India's trade was not suffering noticably from foreign competition. Consequently, the committee advised no

---

[1]Report, 27 Feb. 1875, ibid., No. 22, (Aug.).

changes in the duties on these goods. As far as the import schedule was concerned, the committee concluded that the "only duties which can be deemed prejudicial are those upon certain metals" such as copper, lead, spelter, and quicksilver.[1] Imports of these articles were declining sharply and the committee recommended that the duties on them should be reduced from 7½ percent to 5 percent. It estimated the total cost of these remissions and reductions at Rs.14,75,627.

To make up this loss of revenue the committee proposed that the duties on a number of goods on the import schedule should be raised and that a few articles be added to the list. It recommended that the duty on such luxuries as beads, corals, and perfumery be increased from 7½ to 10 percent. On another luxury item, silk piece-goods, it suggested raising the duty from 5 to 7½ percent. Most important, financially, was its recommendation for increases ranging from 33 to 66 percent in the duties on wines and spirits. The duties on these goods were already fairly high, but they were bought largely by the wealthier section of the community and the committee considered them legitimate subjects for increased taxation. The committee also considered that certain industrial materials could bear heavier taxation. It proposed that the 1 percent duty on

---

[1] Ibid.

iron should be doubled and recommended that machinery, instead of being tax free, should pay a duty of 2½ percent. The committee ostimated that these changes would yield an additional Rs.14,57,506 in customs revenue.

The committee paid special attention to Manchester's complaints against the cotton duties. It found that the Chamber's assertion that valuations were excessive was largely true. With the exception of thread, the value of all cotton goods had declined between 1869 and 1874. The members of the committee agreed unanimously that the valuations should be reduced, though they disagreed over the valuations which should be placed on piece-goods. Three members favoured a valuation of one-half anna per pound below that advocated by the other three. The valuation proposed by the latter group was based on the average prices of the previous thirteen months. Those who favoured the lower valuation believed that prices would continue to decline and thought this should be taken into account. If their proposal was accepted the loss of revenue, based on the 1873-74 cotton imports, would amount to Rs.8,00,000. Adoption of the higher valuation would mean a loss of Rs.6,42,000. The president of the committee, perhaps because he thought that the loss of 6 lakhs of rupees was as much as the Government could afford, cast his deciding vote in favour of the higher valuation.

The tariff committee, on the other hand, concluded

that Manchester's demands for the abolition of the cotton duties were unjustified. It admitted that Lancashire's trade with Bombay in coarse quality goods had suffered slightly from the growth of the local industry. But it maintained that this growth was attributable not so much to the duties as to the "natural capability" which India possessed "for producing goods of this low quality".[1] It noted, too, that since Manchester's trade was almost exclusively in fine quality yarns and fabrics, it encountered little competition from the Indian industry. In 1873-74, for example, the duty on fine quality goods from Lancashire amounted to Rs.77,00,000. The duty on coarse quality yarn and cloth, corresponding to the varieties produced in India, totalled less than Rs.4,00,000. Since competition between the products of the two countries was so limited, the committee concluded that Manchester's demand for the complete removal of the duties was "quite unreasonable". Nor did the committee think that there was much likelihood of India producing fine quality materials. It considered that "the prospect of the finer kinds of yarn and cloth being made with profit or success is notoriously so remote ... that it is quite unnecessary to take it into present calculation."[2] The committee advised the retention of the cotton duties at existing rates.

---

[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid.

The Indian Government took several months to consider the committee's recommendations. Northbrook, who played a dominant role in deciding all important questions of financial policy, carefully studied the report. The tariff policy finally adopted was largely shaped by him and Muir, the Finance Member, though the other Executive Councillors fully supported it. Since they were all free-traders they naturally agreed with the committee's proposals for the remission and reduction of certain duties. They believed in particular that export duties should be reduced as a means of stimulating the country's economic growth.[1] The Government not only accepted the committee's recommendations on export duties but also decided to remove hides and skins from the list. The duty had yielded only Rs.1,51,100 in 1874-75 and the Government considered that it could be given up without difficulty. Northbrook would have been pleased to remove all export duties but the Government could not afford to do this. Because of the need for revenue, it was obliged to retain duties on three of India's leading exports -- lac, indigo, and rice. In 1874-75 duties from these three goods alone accounted for about three-quarters of the total revenue from export duties. Nevertheless, the remissions decided upon by the Government were far from insignificant. Calculated on

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 12 Aug. 1875, ibid., No. 26, (Aug.).

the basis of the 1874-75 trade the loss was Rs.17,30,000.

In deference to the principles of free trade the Government also determined to modify the import duties to an extent far beyond what the committee had advised. The most important decision, and one for which Northbrook was largely responsible, was to reduce the general rate of import duty from 7½ percent to 5 percent. According to the 1874-75 imports this would involve a revenue loss of Rs.17,20,000. There were, however, good prospects that this amount would be recovered within a few years. The reduction of the rate from 10 to 7½ percent in 1864 had stimulated trade to such an extent that the loss of revenue had been recouped within three years.[1] The Government was confident that the same result would follow this reduction. In addition to this general reduction it decided upon a few specific modifications. It believed that the 10 percent duty imposed on tobacco under the 1871 act operated as a protection to the indigenous industry and consequently resolved to reduce it to 5 percent. Largely for similar reasons it decided to remove coffee from the import schedule.

The Government not only contemplated larger reductions than the committee recommended, but disagreed with many of its proposed increases. Northbrook firmly believed that

---

[1] Ibid.

extra favourable treatment should continue to be given to materials vitally required for economic growth. Consequently, it was decided not to increase the duty on iron or to impose a duty on machinery[1] -- a measure which would probably have hampered the growth of the cotton industry, dependent as it was upon the importation of British machinery. Nor did the Government accept the committee's proposal to raise the duties on luxuries and silk goods. It maintained that this would be inconsistent with its reduction of the general rate of duty. Instead, it decided to reduce the duties on these goods from 7½ to 5 percent. The same argument might have been used to reject the committee's recommendations for increased duties on wines and spirits. However, it was necessary to compensate for the loss of revenue and the Government maintained that wines and spirits were "legitimate subjects of taxation" and approved the committee's proposal for largely enhanced duties on them.[2] One other increase which the Government "deemed ... expedient" was the raising of the duty on arms, ammunition, and military stores from 7½ to 10 percent. The enhancement of duties, calculated on the 1874-75 trade, would yield an additional Rs.10,00,000 in revenue.

Although the Government decided to reduce the duty on

---

[1]Ibid. [2]Ibid.

nearly every item on the import schedule, it resolved to maintain the duties on cotton yarn and cloth imports at 3½ and 5 percent respectively. From the first Northbrook was "very averse to giving up our duty on cotton goods" since it was a valuable source of revenue and caused no discontent among the people.[1] Even though he thought the duty might be slightly protective, he considered that it would be unfair, particularly in view of the way India had been treated in the past, to give it up on that account. "It is not altogether to be forgotten," he wrote, "that [in the eighteenth century] when India had manufactures a protective duty was imposed upon them in favour of English manufactures."[2] After studying the evidence and arguments of the tariff committee, Northbrook became absolutely convinced that Manchester's demand for the removal of the duties was unreasonable and determined to reject it. In this he had the unanimous support of the Executive Council.

The Government defended its decision to retain the cotton duties at their existing rates on economic, financial, and political grounds. It agreed with the committee that the duties were too low to "practically operate as a protection to native manufactures."[3] Moreover, the duties

---

[1] N. to Salisbury, 29 Jan. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Resolution, Indian Govt., 12 Aug. 1875, loc. cit.

were imposed solely to raise revenue. Consequently, the Government maintained that the cotton duties did not seriously infringe the principles of free trade.

However, the main reason for the retention of the duties was financial. Cotton duties in 1874-75 amounted to Rs.92,00,000 or about one-third of the total customs revenue. The proposed tariff changes, calculated on the trade of 1874-75, would involve a net loss of revenue of Rs.30,08,000 and the Government was convinced it could not afford further reductions. Since it believed Manchester's demands were unreasonable, it refused to postpone all other tariff reforms in the interests of relieving the cotton duties. The duties were already so low that Northbrook considered that a slight reduction in rate would not stimulate the trade to a sufficient extent to recoup the loss in revenue.[1] He believed that the loss from the entire abolition of the duties could never be made good by minor adjustments in the tariff regulations. Rather, he was sure that it would be necessary to impose excise duties or some other form of direct taxation to replace the loss of such a large source of revenue.[2] But excise duties would be expensive to collect. Moreover, because the Indian cotton industry was still comparatively

---

[1] N. to Mallet, 6 Sept. 1875, N.P., vol. 23.

[2] Speech in Leg. Co., N., 5 Aug. 1875, Leg. Dept. Proc., vol. 719, No. 12, (Aug.).

small, the Government could not expect to obtain a large revenue from excise duties. The Government believed, therefore, that the retention of the cotton duties was essential to maintain financial stability.

The Government's refusal to abolish the duties was also influenced by political considerations. As far as its effect on the people was concerned no tax was less objectionable than that on cotton. The duty was not only low but it was largely borne by the wealthier section of the community since it was this group which purchased the bulk of the fine fabrics imported from England. While the Government was sure that cotton duties "cause no discontent",[1] it believed that if they were removed and direct taxes or excise duties imposed in their place much hostility would be aroused. Northbrook, in particular, was firmly convinced of this. Speaking on the tariff reforms in the Legislative Council, he declared:

> The political evil of giving up our Customs duties, or a large part of them, [ie. cotton duties] and of imposing fresh taxes in their place would be great. ... In India ... new taxes are particularly liable to occasion popular discontent. To substitute direct taxes or new Excise duties for the Customs duties which are now imposed upon foreign goods, seems to me to be a policy which would be contrary to the interests of the people of India, and which no statesman with a knowledge of India and a sense of responsibility could be found to propose.[2]

Although the Indian Government maintained that Lancashire's

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 12 Aug. 1875, loc. cit.
[2]Speech in Leg. Co., 5 Aug. 1875, loc. cit.

demand for the abolition of all cotton duties was unreasonable, it admitted that there was a case for removing the tariff on coarse yarns and cloth. Such a step would have eliminated any slight protection which the Indian industry received from existing duties. Moreover, since Manchester's trade in these goods was small, the loss of customs revenue resulting from this change would have been insignificant. But upon examining the proposal the Government found two important objections to it:

> 1st, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to draw any clear and stable line to describe goods to be thus exempted; and 2ndly, if any such line were fixed, it would be hardly possible to protect it from evasions, and moreover, a very onerous responsibility would be imposed upon customs officers. To fix any such line ... would be to stimulate the indigenous mills to ... manufacture ... goods such as would compete with those just above the line.[1]

For these reasons the Government rejected the scheme.

The Government, while it rejected Manchester's main demands, granted certain concessions. One of the Chamber's complaints had been that the Indian mills were planning to import long staple raw cotton for the production of fine quality fabrics. It had claimed that since there was no duty on this raw cotton the Indian industry would have an unfair advantage in this branch of the trade. The Government doubted whether the Indian mills would undertake the production of fine quality fabrics, but to

---

[1]Resolution, Indian Govt., 12 Aug. 1875, loc. cit.

allay Manchester's fears it decided to impose a duty of 5 percent on long staple raw cotton imported into India.[1] In effect, therefore, the Government was undertaking to protect Manchester from Indian competition in fine quality goods.

Of more immediate benefit to Manchester was the Government's decision to reduce the valuations of cotton yarn and cloth. Having rejected the Chamber's principal demands, the Government decided to be liberal on this point at least. It accepted the lower scale of valuations proposed by the minority of the tariff committee.[2] The new valuation, calculated on the basis of the 1874-75 imports, involved a loss of Rs.8,80,000 in Government revenue.

Shortly after the Government reached its conclusion on the tariff committee's recommendations it drew up a bill to give effect to the changes it had decided to adopt. Several months had already passed since the committee had submitted its report. The commercial community was anxiously awaiting the changes and the Government therefore wished to enact its reforms as quickly as possible. Rather than wait until returning to Calcutta where important legislation was generally passed, the Government introduced the Tariff Bill into the Legislative Council

---

[1]Ibid. [2]Ibid.

during a special session at Simla on 5 August. Only nine of the fourteen members were present and seven of these belonged to the Executive. None of the non-official members were in attendance.

Northbrook, a main speaker in the debate, strongly defended the tariff reforms. He referred with particular pride to the abolition of most of the export duties and the reduction of the general rate of import duty. He represented these changes as an important advance in the direction of free trade and likened them to Gladstone's tariff reforms although these had been on a "far grander scale".[1] He admitted, however, that even the revised tariff violated many of the principles of free trade as established in Britain. "In order to bring our tariff into absolute conformity with the latest development of English financial legislation," Northbrook declared, "all import duties, excepting those on the few articles which India cannot produce, or upon which an Excise duty can be put, should be abolished." While he agreed that in theory such conformity was desirable, he admitted that it was impossible in practice. India was "a far poorer country than England" with "but little choice of new sources of taxation." It, therefore, could not afford a long term loss of the revenue derived from customs duties. Even

---

[1]Speech, 5 Aug. 1875, loc. cit.

though many of the duties were slightly protective, they would have to be retained. Nor did he think that the British Government could fairly object to this, maintaining as he did that "in all financial questions the true interests of the people of India is the only consideration which the Government of India has to regard." He was sure that these interests would not be served by the abolition of the import duties for in his opinion the people would "have to pay a larger sum [in the form of excise duties or direct taxation] than they would gain by the reduced cost of the articles." If the duties had the incidental effect of stimulating the growth of industry, he seemed to think that this would be beneficial for he noted with satisfaction that, whereas in recent years Indian exports had consisted principally of "raw products", there were "signs that Indian manufactures" might "before long take their place in the market of the world."

None of the members present raised any criticism of the Bill and there was little discussion on it. In line with the usual practice on financial legislation of this type the Bill was passed in one session. The Government believed that a long drawn out discussion on the Bill would have resulted in a paralysis of some branches of trade and a loss of revenue. The provisions of the Act came into force at once.

Northbrook assumed that although his tariff policy

might be unpopular with the Lancashire cotton interests it would be supported by the home Government. The Conservatives had by this date abandoned their traditional support of protection and advocated free trade as strongly as the Liberals. Since Salisbury shared these views Northbrook undoubtedly thought that he would endorse any move by the Government of India towards freer trade. This may have been one reason why Northbrook had not consulted Salisbury about the proposed changes in the tariff. But there was another reason too. Northbrook had informed him of the setting up of the tariff committee but Salisbury had evinced little interest in its proceedings. The only point to which Salisbury had referred in his private correspondence was the cotton duties. He had mentioned that Lancashire was stepping up its pressure against the duties, but he had given no indication that he supported their demands.[1] Northbrook had no reason, therefore, to think that Salisbury might object to the retention of the cotton duties, or to any other changes in the tariff.

In fact, however, by the time the Indian Government adopted its Tariff Act Salisbury had already decided that the reduction of the cotton duties should be given priority in any tariff reform. The Lancashire cotton manufacturers were an extremely influential and well organized

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 11 Dec. 1874, and 1 and 27 Jan. 1875, N.P., vols. 11 and 12 respectively.

pressure group to which the Conservatives were particularly amenable since Lancashire was at that time a great stronghold of their party.[1] Following the Conservative victory the manufacturers stepped up the campaign to get rid of the cotton duties which, as already noted, they had begun just before the election. In an effort to gain greater influence over Indian policy they had urged Argyll to appoint one of their members to the India Council, but he had refused though he had made two appointments to the Council.[2] A few weeks after Salisbury took office they renewed this request. A deputation from the Manchester Chamber of Commerce met him and urged "the importance of a certain proportion of the Indian Council being composed of ... members from the commercial community instead of, as at present, the exclusive appointment of military, civil and legal members."[3] Salisbury, an astute politican, informed them that "he would gladly see one or two members of the Council who had financial or commercial knowledge."[4] Shortly afterwards he appointed Andrew Cassels,[5] a former

---

[1]In the 1874 General Election 26 Conservatives were returned for Lancashire, a net increase of 4 seats. Only 7 Liberals were elected for the county. The Conservatives dominated the rural seats but were also stronger than the Liberals in urban areas.

[2]A. Redford, Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade, vol. 2, 1850-1939, p. 27.

[3]Times, 16 Mar. 1874.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Cassels had resided in Bombay between 1843 and 1851 as a senior member of the firm of Peel, Cassels and Company which he had established there.

Director of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, to the India Council. Not content with merely having an advocate in the Council, the Chamber sent a special deputation to Salisbury in the autumn of 1874 urgently requesting the repeal of the Indian cotton duties. Although Salisbury maintained that the financial exigencies prevented the repeal of the duties at that time, he admitted that they were indefensible in theory and that the Government did not regard them "as a permanent source of income".[1] This admission only made Manchester more persistent. Salisbury and the Conservatives soon decided that it would be politically inexpedient to continue to resist Lancashire's demand for the abolition of the duties.

This decision was conveyed to the Indian Government in a despatch drawn up by Salisbury and dated 15 July. Salisbury did not maintain that the duty was seriously protective. He admitted that in the manufacture of coarse grades of cotton the Indian industry had many natural advantages in the presence of which "the effect of the 5 percent duty is probably insignificant".[2] Continuing in a similar vein, he wrote:

> If it were true that this duty is the means of excluding English competition, and thereby raising the price of a necessary of life to the vast mass of

---

[1] Salisbury to Manchester Deputation, 4 Nov. 1874, printed in Times, 5 Nov. 1874.

[2] S.S. to Indian Govt., 15 July 1875, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. 56.

> Indian consumers ... it would be open to economical objections of the gravest kind. I do not attribute to it any such effect.

Salisbury was concerned, however, by the importance which the Lancashire and Indian manufacturers attached to the cotton duties. He maintained that while the former group regarded the duties as an obstacle to the expansion of their trade, the latter group was beginning to look upon them as a boon to their industry. He feared that as competition between the products of the two countries increased these attitudes would become more fixed. Manchester would demand abolition with increasing vigour and the Indian manufacturers would campaign for the retention of the duties. Eventually Parliament would intervene, and, although the duties might not be seriously protective, Salisbury was sure that it would support Manchester and abolish the duties. India would resent this as a sacrifice of her interests to those of England and the result might be a weakening of the British hold on the country. Salisbury wished to forestall such a serious political conflict. Consequently, he advised Northbrook to remove "this subject of dangerous contention" by abolishing the cotton duties as soon as "the state of your finances permit".[1]

When he sent this despatch to India, Salisbury had no notion that the Government was about to legislate on the

---

[1] Ibid.

tariff. He was naturally surprised, therefore, by a telegram from Northbrook on 5 August announcing the adoption of the Tariff Act and outlining its main provisions. He had thought that, in line with his instructions of March 1874 requiring the Government to give him advanced notice of proposed legislation,[1] he would have been informed of any intention to change the tariff.[2] Although he realized that the despatch on the cotton duties had not reached India, he was nevertheless deeply annoyed that the Government had retained the import duties of 3½ and 5 percent on Lancashire goods. Salisbury telegraphed Northbrook that he considered the provisions of the Act very important and that he objected to some of them.[3] He also asked why he had not been informed of the Bill prior to its introduction into the Legislative Council. Salisbury explained his objections and stated his disapproval more emphatically in a private letter. He wrote:

> The Act just passed, reducing Customs by £408,000,[4] and leaving the duty on cotton practically where it was, is at variance with our declared policy, and makes it impossible for us to pretend that we are in earnest in dealing with the cotton duty. I fear the Act will have to be disallowed. ... The change in Customs duties from our point of view is one of the

---

[1] See below pp. 401-03 for an explanation of these instructions.

[2] Salisbury to N., 6 Aug. 1875, N.P. vol. 12.

[3] Telegram, Salisbury to N., 7 Aug. 1875, ibid.

[4] This sum was partly offset by the increased duty on wines, spirits, and other items expected to yield an additional £100,000 in revenue. The net cost of the changes was therefore £308,000.

> gravest matters you could touch legislatively, as it affects England as well as India.[1]

Northbrook was surprised at the disapproval of his tariff policy expressed in Salisbury's telegram of 7 August. He feared that there might be "a fight" with Salisbury over the Act, though upon what grounds he was uncertain.[2] He could not "conceive that Lord Salisbury expected us to reduce or abolish the duty on Manchester cotton goods."[3] He expected that once Salisbury received more information on the tariff changes and the reasons for them he would approve of the Government's policy.[4] To clarify its policy for the benefit of the Secretary of State and Council, as well as for the public, the Indian Government adopted a long resolution carefully explaining the reason for every change it had introduced in the tariff regulations.[5] Much of the resolution was devoted to a forceful defense of the retention of the cotton duties.

In reply to Salisbury's queries the Indian Government also explained why it had not consulted him in advance on the proposed tariff changes.[6] It pointed out that under the instructions laid down in March 1874 it was not

---

[1] Salisbury to N., 6 Aug. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2] N. to Muir, 9 Aug. 1875, ibid., vol. 17.
[3] Ibid.
[4] N. to Mallet, 9 Aug. 1875, ibid., vol. 23.
[5] Resolution, Indian Govt., 12 Aug. 1875, Fin. Dept. Proc., Sep. Rev., vol. 667, No. 26, (Aug.).
[6] Indian Govt. to S.S., 16 Aug. 1875, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. 56.

required to consult him beforehand on any legislative measures which it considered urgent. The Government maintained that the changes in the duties were urgently required. The merchants were "anxiously awaiting" a decision, "the season of the year was the most convenient for the abolition of export duties, and the conditions of trade made it ... of importance that the relief given by the Bill should not be delayed."[1] The Government argued, therefore, that it was justified in avoiding the time consuming procedure of consulting the Secretary of State. It defended its behaviour on other grounds as well.

> It has not been the practice, on former occasions, to refer alterations of Customs duties for the opinion of Her Majesty's Government previously to their being introduced and passed in the Legislative Council; and we consider that in exercising the discretion which is placed in our hands by your Lordship's Despatch we should be guided to a considerable extent by former practice, to which indeed reference is particularly made in that despatch.[2]

After receiving the despatch of 15 July and private letters from Mallet and Salisbury, Northbrook was no longer in doubt of the reasons for, and the seriousness of the latter's objections to his tariff policy. He had realized all along that Manchester had been exerting great pressure for the repeal of the cotton duties, but he maintained that Salisbury should have resisted it and that it would be wrong for the Indian Government to yield to it. In a

---

[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid.

private letter to Mallet, Northbrook wrote:

> The Manchester demand is unreasonable, not supported by the facts of the case, and should be resisted. If I am told that there will be pressure and agitation and irritation, I reply I am sorry for it, but it is the duty of Government to resist agitation ... The duty of the Government of India is to govern India for the best interests of the people of India, and not for the interests of the Manchester manufacturers.[1]

He was particularly dismayed by the threat to disallow the Tariff Act.[2] Although he realized that Salisbury had the power to do this, he warned that disallowance of the Act and the removal of the cotton duties would have grave consequences in India. He believed that if the Indian Government were forced to abandon its carefully formulated and much publicized[3] tariff policy its authority in the country would be seriously undermined. Northbrook was sure, too, that such a course would arouse great public indignation. He reminded Salisbury that the Indian press had strongly condemned the imposition of a 5 percent duty on raw cotton as an unfair concession to Manchester, and suggested that this was an indication of the far greater resentment which the repeal of the duties would evoke.[4]

Northbrook probably realized that all his protests were likely to have little influence on Salisbury. He

---

[1] N. to Mallet, 6 Sept. 1875, N.P., vol. 23.
[2] Ibid.
[3] The proceedings of the Legislative Council were public and the Government had also published the resolution of 12 August explaining its tariff policy.
[4] N. to Salisbury, 16 Aug. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.

knew from experience that Salisbury rarely altered policies once he had determined upon them. At the same time Northbrook himself was so firmly committed to the retention of the cotton duties and the non-imposition of any new taxes that it was scarcely possible for him to back down. It was no doubt partly to avoid being forced to introduce a tariff policy of which he heartily disapproved that, in a private letter to Salisbury in September, he announced his wish to resign the Governor-Generalship.

Salisbury, too, quickly realized the gravity of the conflict between the two Governments. He feared that the deadlock might be impossible to resolve by the ordinary methods of communication. Consequently, he decided upon the unprecedented course of sending his permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Louis Mallet, to India to iron out the difficulties. The India Council was at first hostile to Salisbury's proposal, particularly because the draft telegram suggesting the mission committed them to the rejection of the Government's tariff policy although the official papers had not arrived from India.[1] When the draft was altered so as not to bind the Council to any opinion on the merits of the tariff policy, the majority voted in favour of Mallet's deputation. However, three of the most experienced and able members of the Council,

---

[1]Minute, R. Montgomery, Vice-President of Council, 19 Apr. 1876, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. 216.

Perry, Clerk, and Sir Henry Montgomery, dissented from this decision because they thought that Mallet's mission would constitute an unwarranted interference in the affairs of the Indian Government.[1] Montgomery wrote:

> During the seventeen years I have had a seat in the Council of India, no similar procedure has been suggested, though Budgets have on several occasions been opposed to the opinions of the Home Government. ... It seems to me to be an indirect departure from the axiom hitherto recognised, that India should be governed in India.[2]

Copies of these dissents were later published in Parliamentary Papers and lent much weight to the arguments of those who objected to Salisbury's policy.

However, having obtained the support of the majority of the Council, Salisbury was not deterred by the arguments of the three members and telegraphed Northbrook asking whether he would agree to Mallet's going out to India to "discuss the whole subject" of the tariff.[3] Northbrook assumed from this that Mallet would weigh the arguments of both sides before recommending a settlement. He therefore attached little significance to Salisbury's statement that he could not assent to "the maintenance of duty on manufactured cotton at present rate." Northbrook had been afraid that Salisbury "would take some hasty

---

[1]Minutes, Perry and Montgomery, 2 and 5 Oct. 1875 respectively, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. 216. Clerk signed Perry's Minute.

[2]Minute, Montgomery, loc. cit.

[3]Telegram, Salisbury to N., 30 Sept. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.

step about the Tariff Act", and was relieved that he had chosen to settle the conflict by calm deliberation.[1] After discussing Salisbury's proposal with his Council, Northbrook replied that he heartily concurred with Mallet's deputation.[2] He believed that it would enable Salisbury to understand the position of the Indian Government far better than was possible by correspondence.

In actual fact, as Northbrook soon learned, Mallet was not sent with a free hand to achieve an equitable settlement. Instead, he was sent to impose the views of the home Government. Salisbury was determined to get rid of the cotton duties and proposed Mallet's visit as the best way "to let Northbrook down easy".[3] Mallet himself was in no sense an independent mediator since he was as strongly opposed as Salisbury to the tariff policy of the Indian Government.[4] Northbrook first realized the limited scope of the mission when he received a private letter from Salisbury written late in September. "In any case," the letter stated, "the cotton duties must go, both the duty on raw cotton and on piece-goods, though the mode and the time are a fair subject for further discussion."[5]

---

[1] N. to Mallet, 7 Oct. 1875, ibid., vol. 23.
[2] Telegram, N. to Salisbury, 7 Oct. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.
[3] Salisbury to Mallet, 19 Sept. 1875, Salisbury P., Mallet series.
[4] Mallet to Salisbury, 25 and 27 Sept. 1875, ibid.
[5] Salisbury to N., 29 Sept. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.

The object of the home Government was stated more forcefully still in a letter from Perry. He wrote to Northbrook:

> I do not think you quite appreciate the force of the objections, which Lord Salisbury and Sir Louis Mallet entertain to the cotton duties. The former half-pledged himself to Manchester to remit them on the first opportunity that the state of our revenue would allow, the latter as a rigid Member of the Cobden Club would annihilate everything that in the least involves protection -- and between them they are fully determined if they can to command the abolition.[1]

Perry informed Northbrook that there had been much disagreement in the India Council over Mallet's deputation and enclosed a copy of his own minute of dissent. These communications naturally placed Northbrook in a far more hostile frame of mind both to Salisbury's declared policy and to Mallet's mission.[2] They diminished his hope of settling the disagreement amicably.

But it was Salisbury's despatch of 11 November that really infuriated Northbrook and his Executive Council and doomed Mallet's mission to failure. Firstly, the despatch sharply reprimanded the Indian Government over the procedure it had followed in adopting the Act.[3] Salisbury disagreed completely with the view of the Indian Government that the passing of the Tariff Act was a matter of urgency. He bluntly stated his objection:

---

[1]Perry to N., 7 Oct. 1875, ibid., vol. 23.
[2]N. to Salisbury, 25 Oct. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.
[3]S.S. to Indian Govt., 11 Nov. 1875, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. 56.

> I cannot concur with your Excellency in thinking that the urgency of the case was such as to justify either your failure to inform me of your intentions to legislate upon this subject, or the sudden action by which your proposals have been converted into law.[1]

Salisbury explained that when he had exempted measures 'urgently requiring ... enactment' from the provisions of the legislative instructions of March 1874,[2] he had been referring only to measures which could not be delayed without serious public danger. "By 'urgency' it was not my intention," he wrote, "to express the state of things in which an earlier is preferable to a later passage of a proposed measure." To avoid misunderstanding and to ensure that no important legislation was passed without his prior knowledge and approval, Salisbury instructed the Indian Government "that in future, when you contemplate withdrawing a measure from the operation of the Legislative Despatch of ... March 1874, on the ground of urgency, you will, without delay, communicate your intention to me by telegraph." The addition of this stipulation to the former instructions meant that no legislation except of a very minor nature could be passed by the Indian Government without previously consulting the Secretary of State. The large measure of freedom to determine its own legislative policy, which the Indian Government had previously enjoyed, was to cease.

---

[1] Ibid.
[2] See below, pp. 401-03.

The only feature of the Tariff Act of which Salisbury approved was the reduction of export duties. Nevertheless, he did not wish to disallow the whole Act since it would have an unsettling effect on trade and humiliate the Indian Government. Instead, he requested Northbrook to reconsider his policy on the cotton duties. Salisbury repeated the arguments against these duties given in his despatch of 15 July. But he stated his objections with greater force. He now alleged that the duty was really protective. "On general principle," he wrote, "it is liable to objection, as impeding the importation of an article of first necessity, and as tending to operate as a protective duty in favour of a native manufacture."[1] Therefore it was inconsistent with the policy of Parliament, which had sanctioned the establishment of free trade in all parts of the Empire under direct British control, to allow these duties to be retained. An exception to this rule might be permitted in case of financial exigency. However, exception could not be made for India on this ground when the Government had made general reductions in the tariff costing about £408,000. Salisbury again warned of the importance of acting promptly to avoid an embittered conflict between British and Indian manufacturing interests. He also objected to the duty on raw cotton

---

[1]S.S. to Indian Govt., 11 Nov. 1874, loc. cit.

since it was "intended apparently as a protection to the English industry against competition in the finer articles of manufacture."[1] The duty was not only objectionable in principle but it had not placated the Lancashire manufacturers. Salisbury argued that Lancashire's claims could not be equitably met by imposing a duty on raw cotton but by freeing the Indian cotton trade from all duties. He agreed that these duties should be abolished gradually, but ordered the Government to make provision for their entire removal "within a fixed term of years".[2]

Mallet, who arrived in India shortly after the Government received this forthright condemnation of its policy, found Northbrook and the Executive Council in an extremely implacable mood.[3] Having agreed to his mission on the assumption that the question of the cotton tariff was an open one, they were angry over Salisbury's order for its complete abolition. Northbrook was so distressed over the tone and substance of the despatch that he would have resigned had he not done so earlier. Only after Mallet convinced Northbrook that the misapprehension was largely his own fault, since the telegram of 30 September had stated that the duty on manufactured cotton could not be retained at the existing rate, did Northbrook agree to

---

[1]Ibid. [2]Ibid.
[3]Mallet to Salisbury, 6 Jan. 1876, Salisbury P., Mallet series.

discuss the cotton tariff. From his private discussions with Mallet, Northbrook achieved a better understanding of the force of Salisbury's objections.[1] Perhaps for the first time he realized that opposition to the cotton duties was gaining considerable support in Britain. Partly for these reasons Northbrook assumed a somewhat more compromising attitude.

After several private conversations with Mallet, Northbrook agreed, "at some sacrifice to my own opinions", to reduce the duty on cotton piece-goods from 5 to 3½ percent.[2] But he offered to do this only on condition that Salisbury would withdraw the despatch of 11 November and, in particular, modify his instructions on legislation and retract his order for the total removal of the cotton duties. Mallet thought this concession rather meagre and "pressed to the utmost the condition of absolute extinction of Cotton Duties by a given time."[3] But he realized that to get Northbrook and his Executive Council to agree to this was "altogether hopeless". Consequently, Mallet telegraphed Salisbury recommending him to accept this compromise.

Salisbury considered that "the withdrawal of our

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 7 Jan. 1876, N.P., vol. 12.
[2]N. to Salisbury, 21 Jan. 1876, and Telegram, Mallet to Salisbury, 14 Jan. 1876, ibid.
[3]Mallet to Salisbury, 14 Jan. 1876, Salisbury P., Mallet series.

despatch of November would make the position of Her Majesty's Government untenable."[1] He had promised the Lancashire manufacturers that the duties would be abolished. If he withdrew his orders to that effect, or toned down his objections to the Indian Government's tariff policy he would "have been open to the charges of bad faith which have been repeatedly made against me in the North."[2] Salisbury might have been more conciliatory had Northbrook been remaining in India. But he was to leave in a few months and his Conservative successor, Lord Lytton, was wholeheartedly in favour of the removal of the cotton duties. Salisbury, therefore, had every reason to refuse concessions to Northbrook and he rejected the compromise.[3]

Further discussions between Mallet and the Indian Government, which would almost certainly have been fruitless, were prevented by his being taken ill with a sharp bout of fever.[4] His health severely shaken, and his mission a failure, Mallet left India in the latter part of January. The two Governments were now at greater odds than when he had left England.

Having failed in his genuine effort to reach an agreement with the home Government, Northbrook resolved to place on official record his objections to Salisbury's

---

[1] Salisbury to N., 21 Jan. 1876, N.P., vol. 12.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Telegram, Salisbury to N., 21 Jan. 1876, ibid.
[4] N. to Salisbury, 19 Jan. 1876, ibid.

policy. In this he had the full support of his Council for they were more antagonized than he had been over the despatch of 11 November. The Government wrote two letters emphatically declaring its objections to the orders for the abolition of the cotton duties and to the rules for the control of legislation.

Although the Government remained convinced that the cotton duties had little protective effect, it defended their retention mainly on financial grounds. To give up a source of revenue worth £800,000 a year without off-setting the loss in some way was out of the question. Since the passage of the Tariff Act a new threat to the Government's financial stability had been posed by a sharp decline in the value of silver.[1] This increased the cost of the payments to England which were made in gold. The Government estimated that because of this the cost of the home charges would be £945,000 higher in 1876-77 than in the previous year. In this crisis the Government clearly could not afford a reduction in any of its principal sources of revenue. However, on financial grounds, there could be no objection to reducing the cotton duties if some means could have been devised to replace the loss in revenue. But there were few suitable ways of doing this. The Government refused to impose new direct taxes or

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 25 Feb. 1876, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. C1515.

excises in order to reduce the cotton duties since this would be "certain to create irritation if not serious discontent."[1] Moreover, Salisbury had not indicated that he desired such a course. The Government therefore assumed that he wished the duties to be removed only "if it was possible to do so by a modification of the tariff without imposing any other fresh taxes."[2] Consequently, it examined the possibility of replacing the revenue in this way. On the grounds of free trade the restoration of the abandoned export duties or the addition of new articles to the import schedule would have been indefensible. In the Government's opinion the only feasible means of increasing customs revenue would have been to raise the general rate of import duty from 5 to 7½ percent. Even this change would be unlikely to bring in more than an additional £100,000 in revenue. This would be insufficient to offset any significant reduction in the cotton duties. The Government concluded, therefore, that it would "not be justified in proposing to the Legislative Council at the present time any measure for reducing the customs duty upon cotton manufactures."[3]

Even if an immediate reduction in the cotton duties had been "practicable" the Government would have refused to commit itself to the entire removal of the duties

---

[1]Ibid. [2]Ibid. [3]Ibid.

'within a fixed term of years'. It was particularly critical of Salisbury's instructions to do this. The Government wrote:

> Such prospective measures are open to grave objections upon general principles of finance at any time and in any country; but in India, where revenue is subject to serious fluctuations, and with the probability of a permanent depreciation in the value of silver, ... it would be impossible ... to give up so large an item of revenue within a fixed term of years consistently with the safety of the finances. By so doing we should either compel our successor to impose new taxes for the purpose of meeting this large loss of revenue, and we have ... represented ... the serious effects that will result from the imposition of new taxes for this purpose; or, if the condition of the finances should allow to a remission of taxes, we should pledge our successor to remove the duty upon cotton manufactures, while some other remission of taxation might be more necessary for political or financial reasons.[1]

The Government maintained that Salisbury's orders for the removal of the duties were "inconsistent" with "the interests of India" and appealed to him to modify his policy.

The Indian Government also replied to Salisbury's attack on its failure to consult him in advance about the tariff changes.[2] It reminded Salisbury that he had not stated in the legislative instructions of March 1874 that he regarded an 'urgent measure' as one which could not be delayed without great public danger. The Government explained that it had interpreted an 'urgent measure' as one in which it was advisable to prevent unnecessary delay.

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] Indian Govt. to S.S., 17 Mar. 1876, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. C.1515.

Only after receiving the despatch of 11 November did it realize that "the meaning given to the word 'urgency' ... was intended to be much more limited than was to be inferred from the correspondence." Only then, too, did it learn that Salisbury expected to be consulted in advance on all important legislation regardless of former practice. Because it had misunderstood Salisbury's meaning, the Government maintained that he was "not justified" in attacking its proceedings in the sharp terms used in the November despatch. In a private letter Northbrook warned Salisbury that "the expressions of censure" he had used in that despatch were "damaging to the position of the Governor General".[1]

The Indian Government strongly objected to the instructions for consulting the Secretary of State on proposed legislation as these were clarified and extended by the November despatch. While it admitted the advantage of consultation on all important matters, it resented having to inform him beforehand of virtually all proposed legislation. It feared that the initiative in legislation would be transferred from Calcutta to the India Office. Before the introduction of these rules, the Indian Government had exercised a large measure of independence in legislation. Many acts were passed without reference to

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 17 Mar. 1876, N.P., vol. 12.

the Secretary of State who, of course, could disallow any act with which he disagreed. Under these new rules much of the Government's freedom to legislate would be destroyed. Furthermore, there would be a temptation for the Secretary of State to interpose his authority even in the details of legislation. The Indian Government was particularly concerned about the effect of these rules on financial policy. It was primarily responsible for the finances of India and in the past had had "full discretion, subject to disallowance ..., to pass such financial measures as may be necessary from time to time."[1] "We apprehend," it wrote, "that a change in this practice would be attended by a division of this responsibility in ... the administration of finances, by delay, and by other serious inconveniences." Consequently, the Indian Government requested that all financial legislation might be exempted from the rules requiring prior consultation with the Secretary of State. It also asked for a special assurance "that the present practice of leaving in all ordinary cases the initiation of other legislative measures to the Government of India will not be disturbed." Finally, the Indian Government protested against having to telegraph the Secretary of State whenever it decided to exempt a measure from the legislative rules on the grounds of

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 17 Mar. 1876, loc. cit.

urgency. It warned that "the withdrawal from the Governor General in Council of the power of prompt action on the most important occasions which can arise will ... seriously weaken the authority and hamper the action of the executive Government in India."

Some members of the Executive Council exerted pressure on Northbrook to agree not only to condemn Salisbury's policy on the grounds that it was contrary to precedent and would be inexpedient in practice but to question his constitutional right to interfere with accepted legislative procedure.[1] As strongly as Northbrook believed that it would be detrimental to the good government of India for the Secretary of State to constantly interpose his authority, he realized that the absolute supremacy of the Secretary of State was a fundamental principle of the constitution. He was sure, therefore, that to question Salisbury's right to exert a closer control over legislation would be to lay himself "open to the charge of desiring to establish a claim for the independence of the Government of India which ... could not be listened to for a moment at home."[2] Consequently, he refused to use this argument. However, he had no objection to the Executive Councillors's recording their opinion that by assuming

---

[1]Lytton to Salisbury, 25 June 1876, Lytton P., vol. 518/1; and Minute, Executive Co., 30 Mar. 1876, P.P., vol. 1v (1878-79), No. 240.

[2]N. to Ripon, 4 Feb. 1881, N.P., vol. 1.

such tight control over legislation, Salisbury was acting contrary to the intentions of Parliament as expressed in the acts relating to the governing of India. They expressed this view in a strongly worded minute[1] which Northbrook sent to Salisbury as an appendix to the official letter.

The Government's case for the retention of the cotton duties and for a modification of the rules on legislation was strengthened by the unanimous support it received from the press in India. At first, some newspapers, noting that the Act reduced the valuations on cotton goods and imposed an import duty on raw cotton, condemned it as a sell-out to Manchester.[2] However, the publication of the Government's resolution of 12 August, explaining its policy and showing that in not reducing the cotton tariff it had resisted strong pressure from Lancashire, largely changed this attitude. The Hindoo Patriot, for example, admitted that the resolution placed the Government's policy in a "far more clear and favourable light" and showed

> that the Government has the interests of India at heart, that it has made most substantial concessions ... to relieve the springs of industry in the country, that barring the imposition of an import duty on long-stapled cotton its measures are characterised by a rare breadth of view, and just regard for the interests of the people, and that the triumph of Manchester is after all not so great as we had been originally led to believe.[3]

---

[1]Minute, Executive Co., 30 Mar. 1876, loc. cit.
[2]Editorial, Hindoo Patriot, 9 Aug. 1875; and North-Western Provinces Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 21 Aug. 1875.
[3]Editorial, 23 Aug. 1875.

As Manchester's dissatisfaction with the Act became more obvious, Indian newspapers became more emphatic in their support of Northbrook's tariff policy. Early in December, the Hindoo Patriot called upon the press and people of India to support Northbrook in his resistance against Manchester. "We believe," the editor wrote, "that were it not for his firm and resolute resistance to the selfish demands of Manchester, the import duty on cotton goods would have by this time gone or would have been considerably lowered, and an income tax imposed instead ... to make good the loss of revenue."[1] He claimed that Salisbury had pledged the repeal of the cotton duties out of party political motives and without any consideration for the interests of India. The Hindoo Patriot considered Salisbury's behaviour reprehensible but was confident that Northbrook would not be swayed in his determination to uphold Indian interests. Similar views were expressed by the Bengalee[2] as well as by many vernacular newspapers.[3] The Amrita Bazar Patrika, one of the most influential Bengali newspapers, was so disturbed by Salisbury's policy that it called upon Indians to buy "the products of the Indian mills" and "not to use Manchester cloth any longer."[4]

---

[1]Editorial, 6 Dec. 1875.
[2]Editorial, 18 Mar. 1876.
[3]Bengal Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 18 Mar. 1876.
[4]Editorial, 16 Mar. 1876, ibid., 25 Mar. 1876.

Many Anglo-Indian newspapers also upheld Northbrook's policy. For example, the Times of India declared that the new tariff had received general approval in the country. It condemned Salisbury for abetting the agitation of the Manchester cotton merchants whose aim was to "nip the Indian manufacturing industry in the bud".[1]

Even before the publication of the official correspondence on the tariff early in 1876, some newspapers suspected Salisbury of desiring to exert greater control than usual over the Indian Government, and warned of the dangers of such a policy. The Hindoo Patriot, for instance, claimed that Mallet's deputation, intended as it was to enforce the will of the Secretary of State, was a blow to the status of the Governor-General. It pointed out that the Secretary of State's control over Indian affairs had been increasing in recent years and especially since Salisbury had assumed office. It warned that to treat the Governor-General as a mere "reference clerk" and to weaken his authority by constant interference would reduce his status and jeopardize the good government of India.[2] After learning of the manner in which Salisbury had censured Northbrook in the despatch of 11 November, the Hindoo Patriot wrote:

To us the spectacle is humiliating and alarming, --

---

[1]Editorial, 28 Feb. 1876.
[2]Editorial, 6 Dec. 1875.

> humiliating because the Secretary of State should have found fault with a measure the primary object of which is the good of the people of India, and alarming because it seems that the influence of Manchester seems to be predominant at the India Office. India is quite helpless in protecting her own interests. ... All India admires the courage of Lord Northbrook and is lost in surprise and wonder at the attitude of Lord Salisbury.[1]

Other newspapers shared this view. The Bharat Mihir, a vernacular newspaper, considered that the "reproof" which Salisbury had administered to Northbrook showed that the Indian Government "has no power of independent action".[2] "What competent and able man," it asked, "will, after this, ... accept the appointment of Viceroy?" Most Anglo-Indian newspapers fully endorsed these views. The Englishman, for example, maintained that India could not be governed from England and accused Salisbury of unwarranted interference in the administration of the country.[3] Indeed, the attitude of virtually the entire press was that the Secretary of State's intervention in the actual governing of India should be limited to major issues on which the Governor-General and his Council had shown a disregard for the interests of the country.

Even in Britain Salisbury's policy did not escape criticism. The Times largely supported Northbrook's tariff policy. It considered that the cotton duties were

---

[1]Editorial, 6 Mar. 1876.
[2]Editorial, 8 Mar. 1876, Bengal Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 18 Mar. 1876.
[3]Editorial, 11 Mar. 1876.

too low to afford real protection and maintained that for the time being their abolition would be extremely inexpedient upon political as well as financial grounds.[1] It declared that "the primary duty" of the Secretary of State "was to consider the circumstances of India, and not of Lancashire" and severely condemned Salisbury for yielding so readily and completely to political pressure. It was even more critical of the legislative instructions and wrote:

> The orders, ... if enforced, would effect a revolution in the government of India, and ... degrade the character and sense of responsibility of those entrusted with it. ... A Viceroy and members of Council who are mere puppets, pulled by wires from Downing-street ... could not maintain their own self-respect. Their power ... would leave them, and as the functions and responsibilities of their offices declined none but inferior men would be induced to fill them until we were made aware of the declension from bad to worse by the rude awakening of some catastrophe.[2]

The Daily News, an influential Liberal newspaper which was also critical of Salisbury's tariff policy, shared this view. It wondered what would be the use of "the Governor-General and his Council composed of able men" if Salisbury achieved his objective of making the India Office "the centre of legislation for India".[3] In that case, it commented sarcastically "the telegraph and a few clerks would seem sufficient".

---

[1]Editorial, 25 Feb. 1876.
[2]Editorial, 9 Mar. 1876.
[3]Editorial, 9 Mar. 1876.

In the India Council, too, a few influential voices were raised in protest. Perry and Montgomery, two of the members of the Council who had opposed Mallet's deputation to India, defended Northbrook's general tariff policy. They also adhered firmly to the belief that India should be governed largely by those in India. For these reasons they had both objected to the despatch of 11 November and had recorded minutes of dissent.[1] The large majority of the Councillors, however, fully endorsed Salisbury's policy.

Lancashire Members of Parliament of both parties as well as many leading Conservatives shared this view but a number of Northbrook's Liberal friends who had been carefully watching the growing controversy held different opinions. At their request, the official correspondence on the subject was presented to Parliament. A number of Liberal peers, especially experienced in Indian affairs, objected strongly to Salisbury's policy as outlined in the November despatch and forced a debate on the subject in the House of Lords. The main attack was delivered by Lord Halifax and the Duke of Argyll, both former Secretaries of State for India, and Lord Lawrence, a former Viceroy.[2] They fully endorsed the arguments used by the Indian

---

[1] Minutes, Perry and H. Montgomery, 10 and 16 Nov. 1875 respectively, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. 70.

[2] Lords debate, 14 Mar. 1876, Hansard, vol. 227.

Government for the retention of the cotton duties. They sharply condemned Salisbury for collaborating with the Lancashire merchants to impose a policy to which the Indian Government, backed by the unanimous support of the commercial community and the people of the country, strenuously objected. Lawrence maintained that the cotton duties were "far from ... obnoxious to the people of India" and that "they would probably rather quadruple than abolish them because they believed that the import of English goods had in many instances destroyed those of Native manufacture." Halifax and Argyll were especially outspoken in denouncing Salisbury's legislative rules. These, Halifax maintained, would "reduce the Governor General to a mere tool of the Secretary of State." Argyll admitted that when he had been Secretary of State he had written a despatch firmly asserting the absolute supremacy of the home Government in legislative as well as in executive matters, but pointed out that he had not laid "down the doctrine without qualification". Rather, he had stated in the same despatch that he was 'speaking of a question of abstract right -- not of a question of ordinary procedure' and that 'such power and control ... must ... be used with great deliberation and on the rarest occasions'. Argyll then proceeded to give a forceful condemnation of Salisbury's policy.

Our complaint is that a power which ought to be

> exercised on the rarest occasions, [Salisbury] ... has set up as one that ought to be exercised in the ordinary course of business. ... Under those despatches [of March 1874 and November 1875] the doctrine will be established that the initiative of legislation, which Parliament certainly intended to place in India, shall be transferred to the Secretary of State, and that nothing can be done in the ordinary course of business in India without previous authority from Downing Street. ... The initiative which you destroy there you will not really be able to assume here. ... You will simply smite the Government of India with impotence.

Both argued that one of the surest ways to undermine the authority of the Indian Government in the eyes of the people of the country was to reduce it to a puppet of the home Government acting on behalf of British interests. Though the existence of telegraphic communication made greater control by the Secretary of State inevitable, there was much truth in these arguments.

As a result of the strong opposition, Salisbury considerably modified the policy which he had laid down in the November despatch. Replying in Parliament to the attack of the Liberal peers, he still maintained that the tariff was "an Imperial question ... and ought to be dealt with on Imperial grounds."[1] But he denied having ordered the removal of the duties at the risk of financial embarrassment, though, as the Times pointed out, it was "impossible to reconcile [this] ... plea ... with his past language."[2] He made little attempt to defend his legislative

---

[1] Ibid.
[2] Editorial, 15 Mar. 1876.

instructions as elaborated in the November despatch, undoubtedly because he realized that many of the arguments against them were irrefutable. Instead he concentrated upon the importance of upholding the general powers of the Secretary of State over the actions of the authorities in India. However, this was evading the issue for nobody had questioned the overriding supremacy of the Secretary of State. Objections had only been raised against his constant interference with the government in India and the shifting of legislative initiative from Calcutta to London -- results which surely would have followed from adherence to the instructions contained in the November despatch.

The extent to which Salisbury modified his former policy was shown in the official replies to the final protests which Northbrook's Government had made against his orders on the tariff and legislation. In his despatch on the tariff Salisbury admitted that it would be inexpedient to remove the cotton duties if that would make additional taxation necessary.[1] Because of the depreciation in silver he agreed that the immediate reduction of the cotton duties would endanger India's financial stability and withdrew his orders for their removal within 'a fixed term of years'. However, he was still determined to get

---

[1]S.S. to Indian Govt., (No. 9, Sep. Rev.), 31 May 1876, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. C.1515.

rid of the duties eventually and instructed the Indian Government, by this time under Lytton, to remove them "as soon as the condition of your revenue shall enable you to do so without danger to the good order of your finances."[1] As far as the legislative instructions were concerned, Salisbury still insisted upon being consulted on legislation contemplated by the Indian Government.[2] He maintained that consultation before legislating on financial matters was especially important since it would avoid another conflict such as that over the tariff. However, he declared that this did not imply that the home Government lacked confidence in the ability or judgement of the Governor-General in Council -- it was simply a means of avoiding the difficulty of having to disallow legislation after it had been adopted. He also assured the Indian Government that the rules were not intended to take legislative initiative out of its control. Finally, he explained that in cases of real emergency the Government should disregard the rules rather than delay taking any legislative action that might be required.

Northbrook, who had intended to make a formal protest against Salisbury's policy upon his return to Britain, was largely satisfied with these modifications. After

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] S.S. to Indian Govt., (No. 25, Leg.), 31 May 1876, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. C.1515.

holding private discussions with Salisbury, he concluded that there was no longer any serious difference between them on matters of principle.[1] He no doubt regretted that Salisbury had not exempted financial measures from the legislative rules, but he was confident that there was no longer a danger of the legislative initiative of the Indian Government being destroyed. He was especially pleased that Salisbury had withdrawn his order for the immediate removal of the cotton duties. He placed implicit trust in Salisbury's pledge that they would not be removed at the risk of endangering the Government's financial stability and that new taxes would not be imposed to facilitate their removal.[2] In a speech in the House of Lords in August 1876, Northbrook announced his agreement with Salisbury's present policy on these two issues.

In making peace with Salisbury, whose policies were considerably modified but not fundamentally altered, Northbrook was undoubtedly influenced by the realities of the situation. He realized that telegraphic communications between India and Britain made it inevitable that the Secretary of State would exert closer control over the doings of the Indian Government. Moreover, Manchester was becoming increasingly impatient over the delay in

---

[1]Speech, N., 4 Aug. 1876, Hansard, vol. 231.
[2]N. to Mallet, 23 Dec. 1879, N.P., vol. 7.

abolishing the duties[1] and was gaining more and more support for its views particularly among Conservative Members of Parliament. Northbrook no doubt foresaw that the duties could not be retained indefinitely. "After a Minister has pledged a Government with a large Parliamentary majority to any course upon Indian finance which accords with the interests of a large and influential body in England," he later wrote to a friend, "resistance is next to hopeless either in India or at home."[2]

Although Northbrook undoubtedly expected that the duties would eventually be removed, he strenuously objected to the time and manner in which Lytton's Government carried out this policy. It had hoped to reduce the duties in 1877, but the financial difficulties caused by the severe famine in southern India prevented this. Instead of remitting taxes, the Government, in December of that year, imposed new "taxes to the extent of about £1,000,000 a year."[3] However, Lytton and the Finance Member, Sir John Strachey, were so determined to deal with the cotton duty that, notwithstanding the continuing financial difficulties, they reduced the duty on the coarser grades of

---

[1] In February 1876, a deputation from Lancashire, including most of the M.P.'s of the county, called upon Salisbury and strongly protested against the continuing retention of the cotton duties. /Times, 25 Feb. 1875./ A deputation also met Lytton before he left for India and made a similar protest to him. /Times, 28 Feb. 1876./

[2] N. to Hope, 10 Apr. 1879, N.P., vol. 19.

[3] Speech, N., 19 June 1879, Hansard, vol. 247.

cotton in 1878. In the following year, despite the additional strain upon the finances caused by the war in Afghanistan, Lytton, overruling the majority of his Executive Council, exempted all cotton goods except those of very fine quality from import duties. Northbrook, who had "trusted the assurances" given by Salisbury in 1876 "that taxes would not be put on so as to take off the Cotton duty", and had not "imagined that this pledge would have so soon been thrown to the winds",[1] was incensed by the Government's behaviour and strongly condemned it in a speech in Parliament.[2] Other Liberal leaders expressed similar views. Referring to the remission of the import duties in a speech in the House of Commons, Gladstone declared that there was "something distinctly repugnant in the way it has been done in the time of India's distress and difficulty, by the Government of a Party which has done all in its power to retain every protective duty in this country."[3] However, these views were not widely shared by the rank and file of the party, many of whom had been as adamant as the Conservatives in demanding the reduction of the cotton duties. In short, the difference between the parties on this issue was one of degree rather than substance.

---

[1]N. to Mallet, 23 Dec. 1879, N.P., vol. 7.
[2]Speech, N., 19 June 1879, loc. cit.
[3]Speech, Gladstone, 12 June 1879, ibid.

Before leaving India Northbrook had warned that the removal of the cotton duties, particularly if coupled with increased taxation, would cause serious discontent among the "ignorant classes" and "alienate the best and most loyally disposed of the educated Natives from us."[1] His prediction was correct, for this was precisely one of the effects of Lytton's policy. The press and various political organizations protested vehemently against the removal of the duties. The issue was later taken up by the Congress party which protested against the introduction of absolute free trade in India.

Despite the removal of the duties the Indian cotton industry continued to grow, and between 1878 and 1894, when duties were again imposed, the number of mills increased from 53 to around 140. However, since the duties had been slightly protective, expansion would probably have been greater if they had been maintained. It would certainly have been more rapid if India, like self-governing colonies such as Canada, had been able to introduce a genuine protective duty to promote the growth of the local industry.

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 25 Feb. 1876, N.P., vol. 12.

Chapter VII

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Northbrook, like many Liberal leaders of that period, was strongly opposed to the territorial expansion of the British Empire either in India or elsewhere. Although he was not disposed to abandon existing commitments, he believed that the emphasis should be placed on consolidation rather than on the acquisition of new possessions and of increased responsibilities. In common with most orthodox free-traders he believed that British policy should be directed towards commercial expansion and he undoubtedly envisaged a world in which Britain would have increasing dominance in this field. For Northbrook, as for all those who accepted its full implications, free trade represented a comprehensive economic and political philosophy which stood for international co-operation rather than rivalry, scramble for territory, and war.

In his opinion the arguments against further territorial expansion applied with particular force to India. In the first place he believed that the administrative difficulties of governing such a vast country were already onerous enough without enhancing them by acquiring more territory. But he objected to an expansionist policy mainly on financial and political grounds. He considered that the greatest threat to British rule in India lay not in external attack

but in imposing heavy taxation which would be an inevitable consequence of frontier wars of expansion. Already more than one-quarter of the annual Government revenue was devoted to military expenditure and, as we have seen, Northbrook strongly resisted further increase, believing that it would constitute a legitimate source of discontent. Moreover, he was convinced that the conquest and absorption of frontier states would be opposed by most of the educated classes and that it would arouse considerable alarm among the princes within India. For these reasons Northbrook had "grave objections" to pushing "on the red line".[1]

However, these views were not new, for his two immediate predecessors in India, Lawrence and Mayo, had pursued non-expansionist policies. Lawrence had not only opposed the extension of India's frontiers but as far as possible had avoided interference in the affairs of the border states. His policy was one of inactivity or, as his supporters chose to call it, 'masterly inactivity'. Mayo followed the same general policy though he favoured a somewhat less passive role in foreign affairs. In particular, he endeavoured to strengthen ties of friendship with the border states so that they might form an effective buffer between British India and the other principal Asiatic powers, Russia and China. The nature and objectives of

---

[1]N. to Merewether, 14 May 1874, N.P., vol. 15.

his policy were clearly outlined in a letter written just before his death.

> We should establish with our Frontier States of Khelat, Afghanistan, Nipal, and Burma, and possibly at some future day with Yarkand, intimate relations of friendship; we should make them feel that, though we are all-powerful, we have no wish to encroach on their authority, but, on the contrary, that our earnest desire is to support their power and maintain their nationality; that if severe necessity arises, we might assist them with money, arms, and even perhaps in certain eventualities with men. We could thus create in these States outworks of our Empire, and assuring them that the days of annexation are passed, make them practically feel that they have everything to gain and nothing to lose by endeavouring to deserve our favour and support.[1]

Northbrook came to India anxious to develop this policy and determined to do his utmost to avoid conflict with any of the frontier states -- a determination to which he firmly adhered though the behaviour of Burma and Kalat afforded sufficient pretext for war. While space will only permit a detailed study of relations with the most important country, Afghanistan, it is necessary to refer briefly to his dealings with Burma and Kalat since these illustrate important aspects of his policy.[2]

Relations with Burma had not been very cordial since its defeat in the second Anglo-Burmese War of 1852 and King Mindon, who ascended the throne in the following year,

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 19 Jan. 1872, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 11.

[2]Throughout the period there were no difficulties or important developments in relations with Nepal.

had refused to sign a treaty with Dalhousie acknowledging the British conquest of Lower Burma. But he respected the new frontiers and relations between the two Governments were placed on a more stable footing by treaties of commerce and friendship concluded in 1862 and 1867.[1] To ensure the protection of their political and commercial interests the British secured the right by the latter treaty to establish a Resident at the capital, Mandalay. However, the Burmese were not precluded from entering into diplomatic relations with foreign countries and the manner in which they exercised this freedom[2] coupled with their attempts to import

---

[1] C.U. Aitchison, Treaties, Engagements and Sanads, vol. XII, pp. 237-42.

[2] In 1871 the King received a mission from Italy and concluded a commercial treaty with that country. The following year he sent an embassy to England without prior consultation with the British authorities in India. The King had hoped in this way to establish direct relations with the British Government but he failed to achieve his object because Argyll refused to discuss business with the embassy and its visit was treated merely as a ceremonial one. However, the embassy also spent several months in Paris and its negotiations there led to the conclusion of a commercial treaty with the French Government. Towards the end of 1873 a French mission visited Burma with the object, at least as far as its leader, Comte de Rochechouart, was concerned, of greatly strengthening Franco-Burmese relations. [Indian Govt. to S.S., 27 Mar. 1874, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 17.] King Mindon also claimed that Russia wished to establish treaty relations with him, [Mandalay diary, 16-31 Oct. 1873, ibid., p.92] but according to Northbrook the initiative came from Burma, and he was relieved when Russia "declined even to receive the King's proferred embassy". [N. to Duncan, 12 July 1875, N.P., vol. 17.] However, Franco-Burmese relations caused continuing concern in view of the French position in Indo-China.

extensive armaments caused the Indian Government much concern.[1]

Even more serious trouble occurred over Burmese attempts to establish jurisdiction over Western Karenni -- a measure which would have shut out the British "from all means of communication with the Shan States and China, except through Upper Burmah."[2] For some years the Chiefs of Western Karenni had been on very friendly terms with the British and in 1869 the Burmese Government had acknowledged the supremacy of British influence there.[3] Consequently, when reports were received in 1873 that the Burmese were planning to attack the territory, the Indian Government strongly protested. The Burmese Government was, however, uncompromising. "As Western Karennee is part of the Royal dominions,"

---

[1]Under article 8 of the Treaty of 1867 the Burmese were permitted "to purchase arms, ammunition, and war materials generally in British territory, subject only to the consent ... of the Chief Commissioner of British Burma." The Indian Government had no objection to the importation of substantial quantities of small arms but when the King asked permission to purchase 100 cannons and gun-boats it refused. [Aitchison to N., 30 Aug. 1872, N.P., vol.9.] Northbrook could not see why they wanted to purchase such heavy armaments unless it was "for the chance, in case there should be disturbances in other parts of India, of using them against us." [N. to Argyll, 2 Sept. 1872, N.P, vol. 9.] Fearing that Burma might try to secure these armaments from other European countries, the Indian Government eventually instructed the Chief Commissioner not to allow any arms to pass through British Burma without its specific sanction. [Indian Govt., to S.S., 4 Feb. 1876, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 7.]

[2]Chief Commissioner, Burma, to Indian Govt., 30 July 1874, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 18, p. 644.

[3]Indian Govt. to S.S., 13 Feb. 1874, ibid., vol. 17.

it wrote, "no further correspondence of any description on this matter is necessary."[1] Although Northbrook and the Council disagreed with the proposals of leading officials in British Burma that the territory should be annexed or at least temporarily occupied, they insisted upon its independence being recognized and warned that Burmese interference would not be tolerated.[2] Wishing to avoid hostilities in which they were sure to be the losers, the Burmese agreed to discuss the question and early in 1875 an embassy visited Calcutta for this purpose. However, at these discussions the Burmese adopted a stiff position. "The Embassy," Northbrook wrote, "refuse to abate a jot of the pretensions of the King; and, while asking that our judgement should be suspended for the production of certain documents, they decline ... to undertake that the country in dispute shall remain status quo until the consideration of the matter is resumed."[3] In a final effort to reach a peaceful settlement Northbrook decided to send a special British mission, under Douglas Forsyth, to Mandalay. If the King agreed to maintain the status quo pending negotiations, Forsyth was to attempt a peaceful settlement.[4] But

---

[1]Burmese Govt. to Resident, 9 July 1874, ibid., vol. 18, p. 644.

[2]Indian Govt. to Chief Commissioner, 4 Sept. 1874, ibid., pp. 650-51.

[3]N. to Salisbury, 12 Mar. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.

[4]Indian Govt. to S.S., 13 May 1875, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 3.

if no agreement were reached he was to inform the King that the British were going to demarcate the boundary of Western Karenni and to warn that Burmese interference would be resisted. In other words, war would be avoided unless the Burmese started it. This they were not prepared to do and upon Forsyth's arrival in Mandalay the King renounced all claim to sovereignty over Western Karenni. In June 1875 Forsyth and the Burmese Foreign Minister signed an agreement binding both Governments to observe the independence of the territory.[1]

Before the settlement of this dispute, another source of contention had arisen between the Burmese and Indian Governments. Anxious to develop trade with Western China and to promote British influence there, Salisbury, shortly after taking office, had instructed the Indian Government to send an exploratory mission from Burma.[2] After receiving assurances of Chinese agreement, the Indian Government selected Colonel H. Browne, along with a British topographer and a naturalist, to undertake an expedition.[3] Largely in deference to King Mindon, who objected to British forces passing through his territory, the mission was escorted by only fifteen Sikhs. It was arranged, however, that a Burmese force should accompany the mission until it reached

---

[1]Aitchison, Treaties ..., vol. XII, p. 243.

[2]S.S. to Indian Govt., 23 Apr. 1874, Pol. and Sec. Despatches to India, vol. 17.

[3]Indian Govt. to S.S., 5 Mar. 1875, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 2.

territories under effective Chinese control. As pre-arranged, the mission was met at the frontier by A.R. Margary, a British consular official who had travelled overland from Shanghai. On approaching the town of Momein, just inside the Yunnan border, "hostile demonstrations were observed" and Margary, who had received a friendly reception there a few days earlier, went ahead to find out the trouble.[1] At the town he and his five Chinese servants were treacherously murdered. Browne's party, still accompanied by the Burmese escort, was attacked by a large Chinese force and narrowly escaped capture. A Burmese embassy had arrived in Momein a few days after Margary's first visit and Browne believed they had instigated the Chinese attacks. However, as the Indian Government pointed out, there was no proof of Burmese complicity.[2] In fact, the Burmese had officially informed the Resident at Mandalay of rumours of a threatened attack more than two weeks before it had actually occurred. Moreover, the King had given the expedition every assistance and the Burmese troops had behaved well under Chinese attack. Consequently, the Indian Government instructed Forsyth, who was about to proceed to Mandalay in connection with the Karenni dispute, to thank the King for his co-operation. Shortly afterwards, however, the

---

[1]Chief Commissioner, Burma, to Indian Govt., 6 Mar. 1875, ibid., pp. 1719-20.

[2]Indian Govt. to S.S., 6 May 1875, ibid., vol. 3.

Government learned that Lisitai, the Chinese Governor of Momein who was believed to have been the chief instigator of Margary's murder, had been received "with honour and distinction" at the Burmese Court.[1] Northbrook considered that this news altered "the whole tenor" of Forsyth's mission and feared that unless the King gave a satisfactory explanation of his behaviour war with Burma would be unavoidable.[2] Accordingly, Forsyth was instructed to inform the King of the strong British objection to his reception of Lisitai, and to demand a prompt explanation. The Burmese informed Forsyth that the Governor had brought a despatch announcing the accession of a new Chinese Emperor and had merely been given the usual honours paid to ambassadors. They promised to have no more dealings with him than were absolutely necessary. The Indian Government accepted this explanation but warned that a British escort would have to accompany any future mission to Yunnan. When the Burmese objected to this, Northbrook, fearing that insistence on this point might lead to war, referred the question to the Secretary of State.[3] Plans had already been made for a second expedition and Salisbury, who believed that to rely on a Burmese escort would be to send the embassy to certain death, authorized the Government

---

[1]Telegram, Forsyth to Indian Govt., 26 May 1875, ibid., p. 1355.

[2]N. to Salisbury, 27 and 31 May 1875, N.P., vol. 12.

[3]Ibid.; and Indian Govt. to S.S., 5 July 1875, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 4.

to insist on a British escort.[1] Instructions to this effect were sent to Forsyth but he had left Mandalay before receiving them.

At this time considerable pressure was exerted on the Indian Government for more forceful measures. For some months the unofficial community in British Burma had been advocating the annexation of Upper Burma, and Anglo-Indian opinion generally became more and more critical of Northbrook's conciliatory policy. Most of the Anglo-Indian press considered that the Karenni settlement was humiliating since the Indian Government, instead of merely extracting a pledge from the Burmese to keep out of the territory, had bound itself to respect Karenni independence -- an attitude which strongly contrasted with that of the Indian educated community which was largely pleased that Northbrook had averted an unnecessary war. Following the Burmese refusal to agree to a British escort, Anglo-Indian opinion became more belligerent. "Here in India, as is usual in all such cases," Northbrook wrote, "there has been a loud howl for what they call a spirited policy, which means that we should bully the King of Burma, who is unable to resist us."[2] The desire for a more active policy was shared to some extent by Salisbury. "Though I am far from wishing for war," he wrote, "I feel strongly that we

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 2 July 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2]N. to Salisbury, 2 Aug. 1875, ibid.

cannot afford to lower our tone before the Burmese ... by a hair's breath."[1] He warned Northbrook that if Asiatics suspected that the British had forgotten their warlike traditions enemies would "spring up on all sides". Northbrook, however, was strongly opposed to an aggressive policy and believed that it was in British interests to maintain an independent Burma "as a buffer between our possessions and the Chinese frontier."[2] He did not think that the British should use their superior power to 'bully' the Burmese. "While we must insist upon the King's compliance with those demands which are necessary for our honour and interests, we are, in my opinion," he stated, "more particularly bound, in dealing with a State so weak and lying really at our mercy, not to push our demands one step further than is necessary and just."[3] Consequently, Northbrook determined to settle the dispute over the escort question by negotiation.

To help facilitate a settlement, he decided to appoint an officer of higher rank to the Residency at Mandalay, which was henceforth to be directly under the control of the Indian Government. For the post he selected Colonel H.T. Duncan, an officer who had accompanied Forsyth to Mandalay and was believed to have "great influence with

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 6 Aug. 1875, ibid.
[2]N. to Ripon, 1 June 1883, ibid., vol. 3.
[3]N. to Duncan, 12 July 1875, ibid., vol. 17.

the King".[1] Duncan was instructed to obtain from the Burmese Government, within a reasonable time, a written assurance that British troops might accompany any future expedition through Burma. Northbrook also advised him to inform the King that if he continued "to show the feeling of mistrust" which he had recently displayed, war would be inevitable.[2] Duncan took up his new position in the late summer of 1875. After he explained the Indian Government's position and emphasized that it had no designs on Burma, the King unconditionally agreed to British troops escorting any future mission through his territory.[3] War with Burma was therefore averted and the kingdom remained independent for another ten years when, largely because of fears of increasing French influence, the British conquered and annexed it.

Northbrook's resolute adherence to the policy of conciliation was equally marked in his dealings with the western frontier state of Kalat or Baluchistan. Relations with Kalat were regulated by the treaty of 1854 by which the Khan pledged to rely on British advice in foreign affairs; to protect merchants passing through his territories; to prevent raids into British India; and to permit the stationing of British troops in his country whenever

---

[1] N. to Salisbury, 12 July 1875, ibid., vol. 12.
[2] N. to Duncan, 12 July 1875, loc. cit.
[3] N. to Salisbury, 7 Oct. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

that might be deemed necessary. In return, the Khan received an annual subsidy of Rs.50,000. Kalat was, therefore, firmly within the British sphere of influence. However, in the early 1870's it was still a weak link in the chain of buffer states because of internal disturbances caused by disagreement between the ruler, Khudadad Khan, and his principal sirdars. Although the Khan was little more than the head of a loose confederacy of tribal chiefs, he attempted to increase his authority at their expense. In 1871 the leaders of the Brahui tribe, one of the largest in Kalat, rebelled against him. During the ensuing anarchy trading caravans were plundered in the Bolan Pass and British territory was raided. By the beginning of 1872 the disorders had reached such proportions that Mayo's Government considered that the situation was "most prejudicial to British interests", and, though it refused "under any circumstances" to send a force into Kalat to assist the Khan, it agreed that Sir William Merewether, the Commissioner of Sind, should try to arrange a settlement between him and his sirdars.[1] However, neither Merewether's mediation nor the personal meeting which Northbrook held with the Khan in November 1872 resulted in any permanent improvement. Inter-tribal friction continued, more caravans were plundered, and British relations with the Khan became increasingly

---

[1]Indian Govt. to Bombay Govt., 11 Jan. 1872, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 11. pp. 236-38.

strained because of his failure to observe his treaty obligations. In a final attempt to remedy affairs, Merewether held a personal meeting with the Khan in February 1873. When his advice produced no effect, Merewether, acting in accordance with the warning which Northbrook had given the Khan in November, suspended the annual subsidy and withdrew the British Agent in Kalat.[1]

During the next year the Khan showed little desire to re-establish close relations with the British and disorders increased. The Marri tribe committed extensive depredations within Kalat and in February 1874 a party of two hundred Bhahuis raided British territory in pursuit of their fugitive slaves.[2] Merewether considered that the time had come for the British to take strong measures to restore order and proposed that troops should be sent into Kalat.[3] He had little hope that Khudadad Khan would be able to reassert his control and anticipated that the sirdars would depose him before the troops reached the capital. If not, then Merewether thought the British should do so. He was optimistic that a new ruler, elected by the chiefs and liberally supported by the Indian Government, would establish

---

[1]Memo. of interview between N. and Khan, 5 Nov. 1872, ibid., vol. 13, pp. 1382-83; and Merewether to Indian Govt., 3 May 1873, ibid., vol. 15, pp. 765-807.

[2]Sind Commissioner to Indian Govt., 10 Mar. 1874, For. Dept. Proc., vol. 772, No. 159, (May).

[3]Ibid.; and Merewether to N., 28 May 1874, N.P., vol. 15.

a competent administration. Merewether also recommended that British forces should blockade the Marris in punishment for their depredations. He warned that unless his proposals were adopted frontier disturbances would increase and British prestige would suffer.

However, Northbrook objected to such forceful action. He thought that a military expedition was justified only "on grounds of absolute and urgent necessity" and that the question was so important that it "ought to be decided by wider considerations than the mere exaction of satisfaction for a local outrage on our frontier."[1] He was sure that such a policy would weaken British arguments against Russian advances in Central Asia, create alarm in Afghanistan, and undermine the Indian Government's efforts to extend its influence there. Moreover, since there was no dominant tribe in Kalat, Northbrook feared that British forces might be obliged to occupy the country for an indefinite period or even annex it and, since he wished to avoid this, he rejected Merewether's recommendation.[2] He also objected to blockading the Marris favouring instead the suggestion of the Punjab Government[3] that a party of British officers should visit their leaders in an effort

---

[1] N. to Merewether, and enc., 21 Mar. 1874, ibid.
[2] Ibid.; and N. to Merewether, 14 May 1874, ibid.
[3] Through the Deputy Commissioner of Dera Ghazi Khan the Punjab Government shared responsibility with the Commissioner of Sind for relations with the Marri and Bugti tribes.

to achieve a peaceful settlement of inter-tribal quarrels and to arrange for the safe transit of trading caravans.

Merewether reacted so sharply against the decision to try to conciliate the Marris and reiterated the need for a military expedition against the Khan with such urgency that Northbrook agreed to examine the whole question of future policy towards Kalat. Since the matter was a difficult one, he summoned Merewether and Captain Robert Sandeman, the Deputy Commissioner of Dera Ghazi Khan and a firm supporter of the traditional Punjab frontier policy of patient conciliation, to Calcutta to discuss the merits of the opposing methods of dealing with Kalat. After these discussions the Government concluded that "the situation, though not without gravity, does not at present render it necessary or expedient that we should resort to armed intervention."[1] It also adhered to its former decision against blockading the Marris. The Government was not prepared, however, simply to let matters drift. It was particularly anxious to prevent "plundering within or near the British frontier." Tribesmen who committed offences in British territory and were apprehended there were to receive "the utmost penalty of the law" while those who escaped to Kalat were to be pursued and punished.[2]

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 22 Jan. 1875, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 1.

[2]Ibid.

To ensure that these measures were carried out, the Government increased the size of the Frontier Police force. The Government did not acknowledge "direct responsibility for the safety of caravans in Khelat territory", but agreed to spare no "legitimate efforts" for their protection.[1] It was convinced that this could be achieved only by making arrangements with individual tribes. In return for their abstinence from plundering caravans the Government would grant them subsidies. Before this policy could be generally implemented, however, it was essential to reach an understanding with the Marris and Bugtis, the tribes which had been responsible for most of the recent depredations. As a first step, therefore, the Government instructed Captain Sandeman to visit these tribes, explain the British desire for peaceful agreement, secure compensation for property which they had plundered in recent years, and gain their co-operation in protecting caravans. Although his mission was successful and the measures taken for protecting the British border zone also proved effective, inter-tribal feuds continued.[2] But Sandeman was confident that agreement between them and the Khan could be achieved by peaceful mediation. Anxious that order should be restored, the Indian Government sent him on a second mission aimed at a

---

[1]Ibid.

[2]Resolution, Indian Govt., 16 Oct. 1875, ibid., vol. 7, pp. 135-41.

general settlement of Kalat affairs. After meeting the leaders of the principal tribes, all of whom agreed to mediation, Sandeman opened communications with the Khan who also expressed a desire for a peaceful settlement.[1] Accompanied by the tribal leaders, he proceeded to the capital where he was cordially received by the Khan. At this stage however his efforts were thwarted by Merewether who maintained that Sandeman had no authority to negotiate with the Khan and had earlier ordered him to return to British territory. Although Sandeman had disobeyed this order on the grounds that the Government had instructed him to make every effort to achieve peace, the Khan soon learned of the disagreement and, undoubtedly fearing that he would incur Merewether's displeasure, declined to continue negotiations for a settlement with the tribes. Sandeman was therefore obliged to abandon his mission. Following his departure skirmishes between the Khan and the tribes revived.

Northbrook, who considered that Sandeman had only made such efforts "as any British officer was bound to make in order ... to prevent bloodshed", resented Merewether's interference with the mission and his persistent desire for a military expedition.[2] Since the Punjab authorities,

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 14 Jan. 1876, ibid.; and Resolution, Indian Gvot., 14 Mar. 1876, ibid., vol. 8, pp. 313-15.

[2]N. to Salisbury, 28 Jan. 1876, N.P., vol. 12.

on the other hand, were fully in accord with the Government's policy, Northbrook decided to give them charge of Kalat affairs and early in 1876 transferred control from Merewether to Colonel Munro, the Commissioner of Derajat division of the Punjab. Convinced that Sandeman had not yet had a fair chance of achieving a peaceful settlement, Northbrook resolved to give him another opportunity. He reached this decision notwithstanding the renewed disturbances in Kalat and lack of support from Salisbury who thought that the Government would "have to recur to the sterner and more vulgar method of pacification which consists in knocking both the combatants down."[1] Sandeman, who started on his third mission in April 1876, just before Northbrook's departure from India, was instructed to try to arrange "a general settlement of differences between the tribes themselves and between them and the Khan" and to re-establish "friendly relations between him and the British Government."[2] Only if he failed to achieve these objectives would the Government consider using force. This, however, did not prove necessary for Sandeman's mission was a complete success, thus thoroughly vindicating Northbrook's adherence to a policy of patient diplomacy.

Whereas difficulties with Burma and Kalat were largely inherited from earlier administrations, British-Afghan

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 11 Feb. 1876, ibid.
[2]Resolution, Indian Govt., 14 Mar. 1876, loc. cit.

relations had rarely been better than when Northbrook took office. Afghanistan was the crucial link in the chain of buffer states for her territories commanded the main approaches to north-western India from which the great invasions of the past had come. Moreover, she lay between British India and the Russian armies which for more than a decade had been steadily advancing southward into Central Asia. Because of the great strategic importance of Afghanistan, even Lawrence had taken active measures to promote British influence there. It was true that he had refused to take sides in the war of succession which raged in Afghanistan during most of his term, but once Sher Ali had established his ascendency in 1868, Lawrence sent him a gift of Rs.6,00,000, promised him further financial assistance, and offered to meet him to discuss future relations between the two Governments.[1] Before such a meeting could be arranged Lawrence had retired but shortly after taking office Mayo met Sher Ali at Ambala. Although his two northern neighbours, Khokand and Bukhara, had recently been obliged to accept Russian suzerainty, Sher Ali showed no apprehension of external agression, but was exclusively concerned about strengthening his own position in Afghanistan. He wanted the Indian Government to declare publicly that it would never "acknowledge any friend in the whole of

---

[1] Viceroy to Amir, 9 Jan. 1869, P.P., vol. lvi (1878-79), No. C.2190.

Afghanistan save the Ameer and his descendants."[1] He was also anxious to obtain a fixed subsidy. Mayo refused to enter such a binding alliance but assured the Amir that the British Government

> will view with severe displeasure any attempts on the part of your rivals to disturb your position as Ruler of Cabul and rekindle civil war, and it will further endeavour, from time to time, by such means as circumstances may require to strengthen the Government of your Highness, to enable you to exercise with equity and with justice your rightful rule, and transmit to your descendants all the dignities and honours of which you are the lawful possessor.[2]

At the same time, Mayo assured him that the British would not interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. Although the Amir did not secure the guarantees he desired, he was impressed by Mayo's personal friendliness, and was no doubt relieved that no effort had been made to place a British Resident in his country. During the remainder of Mayo's term relations between the Indian Government and the Amir remained cordial.

Although Northbrook was determined to build upon these foundations, relations between the two countries soon deteriorated. The first difficulty arose over the British settlement of a long-standing boundary disagreement between Afghanistan and Persia. Anxious to preserve the integrity of Afghanistan and to prevent war between her and Persia over their rival claims to the province of Seistan,

---

[1]Quoted in Indian Govt. to S.S., 1 July 1869, ibid.
[2]Viceroy to Amir, 31 Mar. 1869, ibid.

the British Government in 1869 had undertaken to arbitrate in the matter. The Amir had agreed to arbitration with confidence that his claims to the whole of the province of Seistan would be recognized.[1] However, Major-General Goldsmid, the arbitrator, basing his opinion on what he considered "the rights and reasonable expectations of both parties" decided upon a line midway between the boundaries claimed by Persia and Afghanistan.[2] Nur Muhammad Shah, the Afghan Prime Minister who went to Seistan to put forward his country's case, objected to Goldsmid's decision. Afterwards he came to India to see Northbrook and made a formal protest.[3] The Indian Government had already expressed its opinion that the award was fair to both sides and Northbrook adhered to that view. He believed, however, that Afghanistan deserved compensation for Persian raids made into her territory prior to the award. Fearing that the Persian Government would refuse to pay this, Northbrook promised to give the Amir Rs.5,00,000 provided he accepted Goldsmid's decision.[4] But the Amir would not be bribed into acceptance and he emphatically endorsed the protests which Nur Muhammad Shah had made against the

---

[1]Kabul Agent to Peshawar Commissioner, 9 Sept. 1872, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 13, p. 874.

[2]Goldsmid to Indian Govt., 30 Nov. 1872, ibid., vol. 14, pp. 503-12.

[3]Indian Govt. to S.S., (Nos. 1C and 2C), 4 Dec. 1872, and enc. ibid., vol. 13.

[4]N. to Argyll, 1 Dec. 1872, N.P., vol. 9.

Seistan award.[1] Nevertheless, the British Government insisted upon the acceptance of the decision by both Afghanistan and Persia.

Whereas the Amir had agreed to arbitration in Seistan, he was unaware of the efforts which, at the same time, were being made by the British Government to reach an understanding with Russia on the northern limits of Afghanistan. Both Lawrence and Mayo had favoured Britain's opening negotiations with Russia in an attempt to define their relative spheres of influence in Central Asia. Lord Clarendon, the Liberal Foreign Secretary, considered that such an agreement would reduce tension between the two Empires and raised the question with the Russians in 1869. Although no agreement was reached on a line of demarcation, a general understanding was achieved between the two countries. Prince Gortchakov gave "positive assurance that His Imperial Majesty looks upon Afghanistan as completely outside the sphere within which Russia may be called upon to exercise her influence" and declared that his Government had no intentions "opposed to the independence of that State."[2] At the same time, the British declared that Khokand and Bukhara were outside their sphere of influence. During the next few years both powers largely acted

---

[1]Amir to N., 20 Jan. 1873, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 14, pp. 389-90.

[2]Gortchakov to Brunnow, 7 Mar. 1869, P.P., vol. lxxv (1873), No. C.704.

according to this understanding but disagreement developed over the boundary between their respective spheres.[1] Russia claimed that the provinces of Badakhshan and Wakhan did not form part of Afghanistan. However, the Amir, who was subsequently informed of the 1869 negotiations, claimed the allegiance of these provinces and of all territories south of the river Oxus. The Indian Government firmly supported his view.[2] But Russia showed no disposition to come to an agreement on the question. Fearing that continuing doubt over Afghanistan's northern boundary would lead to trouble in Central Asia, the British Government made a unilateral decision in 1873. It declared that the Oxus, from Wood's Lake down as far as Khoja Saleh, formed the northern limits of Afghanistan and that the Amir should have the right to defend all territory south of that line.[3] The Russian Government, faced with the firm British declaration, assented to it and expressed its desire for continuing peace in Central Asia.[4] The news of the boundary settlement came as a shock to the Amir who had not been informed that negotiations on the subject were taking place nor consulted about the specific boundary line adopted. This was undoubtedly a blunder, though responsibility for

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 30 June 1873, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 15.

[2]Indian Govt. to S.S., 5 Apr. 1872, ibid., vol. 12.

[3]Granville to Loftus, 17 Oct. 1872, P.P., vol. lxxv (1873), No. C.699.

[4]Gortchakov to Brunnow, 31 Jan. 1873, ibid.

it rested not so much with Northbrook as with the home Government which had not kept him fully informed of events.[1] The Amir offered no immediate objection to the actual boundary adopted though trouble later occurred over the section of the upper Oxus, which did not constitute a natural boundary since the same tribes inhabited both sides of the river.[2] But he thought that a boundary settlement was unnecessary when only a few years before Britain and Russia had reached an understanding on their policies towards Afghanistan.[3] He believed, too, that Russia would now extend her control to the banks of the Oxus and feared for his future security.

Even before this boundary settlement Russia's approach had begun to cause Sher Ali some anxiety. Despite frequent statements by the Russian Government that it did not contemplate further expansion, the Generals on the frontier continued to press forward and in 1872 began a campaign against Khiva. This seriously alarmed Sher Ali for Khiva controlled an uninterrupted route leading to Herat in western Afghanistan. He was sure that once they had conquered Khiva they would advance to Merv and then attack

---

[1]N. to Argyll, 24 Jan. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.

[2]The reasons for the adoption of the branch which flowed from Wood's Lake and the difficulties to which this led in later decades are fully discussed by G.J. Alder in British India's Northern Frontier, 1865-1895, chs. 4 and 5.

[3]Kabul Agent to Peshawar Commissioner, 5 May 1873, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 15, pp. 1063-65.

Herat to capture any Turkomans who sought refuge there. "My anxiety ... on account of the Russians," he informed the Indian Government through their 'native' Agent in Kabul, "will never be removed unless the British Government adorns the Afghan Government with money and ammunitions of war for the troops, and unless great aid is given for the construction of strong forts throughout the northern Afghan border."[1] To strengthen his defences he appealed to the Indian Government for 20,000 rifles.[2]

Northbrook did not share the Amir's alarm. He believed that the Anglo-Russian agreement on the Afghan boundary reduced the danger of war in Central Asia which might otherwise have arisen through misunderstanding about frontiers. He was "by no means ... without sympathy for Russian progress even to Khiva"[3] and thought it was "almost a matter of indifference" what Russia did, as long as she did not "touch Persia or Afghanistan".[4] In common with many Liberals he considered that Russia was carrying out an important civilizing mission among the lawless, slave-dealing tribes on her frontier. It was largely for these reasons that he turned down an appeal for assistance from a Khivan deputation which visited India in 1872.[5]

---

[1]Ibid.
[2]Punjab Govt. to Indian Govt., and enc., 13 Feb. 1873, ibid., vol. 14, p. 646.
[3]N. to Mallet, 4 May 1873, N.P., vol. 21/2.
[4]N. to Argyll, 9 June 1873, ibid., vol. 9.
[5]Indian Govt. to S.S., 26 Sept. 1872, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 13.

Northbrook believed that Russian expansion was directed mainly towards protecting her commerce in Central Asia and was convinced that she had no hostile designs on Afghanistan much less on India. At the time of the Khivan conquest he wrote:

> My view may seem paradoxical, but it is that the more Russia extends her possessions in these parts, the more open she is to injury from us, while she has no more power to injure us than she had before. ... We could by money and officers force Russia back from some of her positions, while she is not more able to hurt us than she was [in 1854] either by arms or by influence. I say by influence, because the nearer she comes, the less her interposition in India is likely to be looked forward to as a blessing by the Indian Mussulmans who are our most dangerous class.[1]

There was undoubtedly much foundation for Northbrook's views for Russian domination was vigorously resisted by the Muslim powers of Central Asia.

Although Northbrook was not apprehensive about the Russian advance, he was concerned over its effect on the Amir.[2] In the hope of calming his fears and of reconciling him to the boundary settlements, Northbrook proposed that the Commissioner of Peshawar should go to Kabul to discuss these matters.[3] The Amir agreed to such talks but preferred that they should be held in India and suggested that Nur Muhammad Shah should meet Northbrook at Simla.[4] Realizing

---

[1]N. to Argyll, 28 Mar. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.
[2]N. to Granville, 6 Dec. 1872, ibid., vol. 20.
[3]N. to Argyll, 14 Mar. 1873, ibid., vol. 9.
[4]Kabul Agent to Peshawar Commissioner, 14 Apr. 1873, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 14, p. 855.

the Amir's objection to receiving British officers in his country, Northbrook agreed to this. The Afghan Minister arrived in Simla in June 1873.

At the ensuing conference, which lasted for more than a month, Nur Muhammad Shah accepted the Seistan settlement but only "after prolonged discussions regarding the conditions under which the arbitration was undertaken".[1] He raised no serious objections to the northern Afghan boundary line as defined by Britain but instead raised the whole question of British policy towards his country in the light of Russian expansion in Central Asia. Anxious to allay his fears of Russia, Northbrook informed him during their first meeting that "if in the event of any aggression from without, British influence were invoked and failed by negotiation to effect a satisfactory settlement, it was probable that the British Government would ... afford the Ruler of Afghanistan material assistance in repelling an invader."[2] Such assistance would be dependent upon his following British advice in external affairs. However, neither this assurance nor Northbrook's reminder of Russia's promises not to interfere with Afghanistan satisfied Nur Muhammad Shah. He maintained that the Afghans would never trust Russia's pacific promises and would not be satisfied until the Indian Government gave

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., (No. 74), 15 Sept. 1875, ibid., vol. 15.

[2]Memo. of interview, 12 July 1873, ibid., p. 1068.

his country a more specific guarantee of assistance.

Anxious to keep on friendly terms with Afghanistan, Northbrook decided to assure the Afghan Minister "that if he unreservedly accepts and acts on our advice in all external relations we will help him with money, arms, and troops, if necessary, to expel unprovoked invasion."[1] The Indian Government would be the judge of the necessity for such aid. Before giving this assurance Northbrook consulted Argyll who had earlier warned him that "great caution" was necessary in assuring the Amir of material assistance which might "raise undue and unfounded expectation."[2] This time Argyll advised Northbrook to inform the Amir that the Cabinet, which was wary of entering into extensive commitments in Central Asia, did not share his alarm about Russia, but that it would maintain its "settled policy in favour of Afghanistan."[3] Professor Dodwell has interpreted the Cabinet's reply as an outright rejection of Northbrook's proposal and suggested that if it had followed his advice the whole course of developments in Central Asia might have been different.[4] But Northbrook certainly did not interpret Argyll's telegram as a rejection of his proposal. At the meeting with Nur Muhammad Shah a few days later he

---

[1]Telegram, Viceroy to S.S., 24 July 1873, P.P., vol. lvi (1878-79), No. C.2190.
[2]Telegram, S.S. to Viceroy, 1 July 1873, ibid.
[3]Telegram, 26 July 1873, ibid.
[4]Cambridge History of India, vol. VI, pp. 410-11.

declared that

> the British Government did not share the Ameer's apprehensions, but ... it would be the duty of the Ameer, in case of actual or threatened aggression, to refer the question to the British Government, who would endeavour by negotiation and by every means in their power to settle the matter and avert hostilities. ... Should these endeavours ... prove fruitless, the British Government are prepared to assure the Ameer that they will afford him assistance in ... arms and money, and will also in the case of necessity for such aid him with troops.[1]

The Indian Government would determine the necessity for such aid which was to be conditional upon the Amir's having abstained from aggression and his following the Government's advice on external relations. This pledge was virtually identical to what he had earlier proposed and Northbrook, who hoped that the home Government would not think he had "gone too far",[2] was undoubtedly relieved when Argyll replied that he approved his "communications with the Ameer".[3] Never before had such a clear-cut assurance of aid been given to Afghanistan.

Even this promise did not satisfy the Afghan Minister, who wanted an unconditional guarantee of assistance. He requested that "the contingency of aggression by Russia should be specifically mentioned in the written assurance to be given to the Ameer."[4] However, Northbrook refused

---

[1]Memo. of interview, 30 July 1873, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 15, p. 1075.
[2]N. to Argyll, 25 Aug. and 8 Sept. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.
[3]Argyll to N., 9 Oct. 1873, ibid.
[4]Memo. of interview, 30 July 1873, op. cit., p. 1076.

to do this not only because it would annoy a "friendly power" but because it would imply that the British Government disbelieved Russia's assurances that she would not interfere with Afghanistan and instead regarded a Russian attack as probable. There were other dangers in entering such a binding agreement as the Afghan Minister desired. If the Amir were sure that the British Government would come to his aid in any attack he might have been tempted to pursue policies towards his neighbours which might indirectly provoke such attacks. Furthermore, Central Asia was such a turbulent area that it would have been difficult to determine who was responsible for any clash that might arise. Although Northbrook, and probably the Liberal Cabinet too, believed that the Government of India would be obliged, under most circumstances, to aid Afghanistan against external aggression, he was undoubtedly wise in not giving an unconditional guarantee to that effect.

Besides considering the question of prospective assistance, Northbrook and Nur Muhammad Shah also discussed the subject of helping the Afghan Government to meet its immediate needs. In this connection, Northbrook was disturbed to find that the Afghan Minister interpreted the general assurances of friendship given by Lawrence and Mayo to mean that the Indian Government would accede to any request for aid. They had made no such pledge although Mayo had promised that representations from the Amir would be

treated with consideration. Northbrook agreed to do likewise, but emphasized that the Indian Government was always to judge the propriety of any request from the Amir.[1] Having clarified this issue, which might have led to future misunderstanding, Northbrook made a liberal offer of help. In line with the Amir's earlier request for arms, Northbrook promised to send him 5,000 rifles immediately and another 15,000 as soon as the supplies on order arrived from Britain.[2] In addition to the Rs.5,00,000 Northbrook had already promised the Amir in compensation for Persian raids, he offered him another five lakhs. The value of the arms and ammunition was estimated at five lakhs so that the total value of the gift was fifteen lakhs -- more than the total sum which had previously been given to Sher Ali. In a letter to the Amir Northbrook assured him that the Indian Government desired to see Afghanistan "powerful and independent" and that it would "endeavour from time to time, by such means as circumstances may require, to strengthen [his rule]."[3]

Northbrook admitted privately that "the Envoy gave an infinity of trouble",[4] and he himself was not altogether pleased with the results of the conference. He did not consider that the policy which the Indian Government would

---

[1]Ibid., p. 1072.
[2]Memo. of points to be laid before Amir, undated, ibid., pp. 1081-83.
[3]N. to Amir, 6 Sept. 1875, ibid., pp. 1085-87.
[4]N. to Argyll, 8 Sept. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.

pursue in the event of an attack on Afghanistan had been finally settled and contemplated further discussions on this subject at a more suitable opportunity.[1] The Indian Government admitted that its "objects and policy" were still not "clearly understood and appreciated in Afghanistan."[2] Moreover, it had assumed considerable responsibility for protecting Afghanistan from aggression but had little information on the country's northern boundary. With the object of remedying this deficiency, the Indian Government requested that "a British officer of rank, accompanied by a competent staff" should visit Afghanistan as soon as possible.[3] The main task of the mission would be to survey the northern and western frontiers of the country and then consult with the Amir on measures required for their security. Besides supplying valuable geographical and political information, it was hoped that the mission would allay any mistrust of the British which still existed in Afghanistan.

As a counterpart to his assurances of increased support for the Amir, Northbrook thought that the British Government should inform Russia that it was firmly committed to maintain the independence of Afghanistan. "Anything like a doubt," he wrote, "as to what we do or do not care about

---

[1] N. to Amir, 6 Sept. 1873, loc. cit.
[2] Indian Govt. to S.S., (No. 75), 15 Sept. 1873, ibid.
[3] Memo. of points to be laid before Amir, loc. cit.

between Russia and ourselves would be likely, as in the case of the Crimean War, to bring about the quarrel which it is our object to avoid."[1] With the aim of clarifying matters, the Indian Government drew up a letter, which Northbrook hoped would be communicated to Russia, clearly setting forth its views on Central Asia. The Government considered that the Afghan boundary agreement would have a salutary effect provided England and Russia adhered "to the policy of non-annexation".[2] It emphasized that continued Russian advance would alarm Afghanistan and warned against interference there.

> Although we have abstained from entering into any treaty engagement to support the Ameer by British troops, in the event of Afghanistan being attacked from without, yet the complete independence of Afghanistan is so important to the interests of British India that the Government of India could not look upon an attack upon Afghanistan with indifference. So long as the Ameer continues ... to act in accordance with our advice in his relations with his neighbours, he would naturally look for material assistance from us; and circumstances might occur under which we should consider it incumbent upon us to recommend Her Majesty's Government to render him such assistance.[3]

Northbrook attached great importance to this paragraph which was "intended, in the most civil terms, to let Russia know that an attack on Afghanistan would probably oblige us to fight."[4] Although the Cabinet undoubtedly agreed

---

[1] N. to Argyll, 30 June 1873, N.P., vol. 9.
[2] Indian Govt. to S.S., 30 June 1873, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 15.
[3] Ibid.
[4] N. to Grenville, 30 June 1873, N.P., vol. 21/2.

with the Indian Government on the importance of preserving the independence of Afghanistan, it opposed sending the letter to Russia. Argyll thought that "it might be useful to make this communication", but feared that Russia might be prompted to reopen the whole question of their relations in Central Asia.[1] He thought that would "be injurious" and "finding this to be the prevalent opinion of the Cabinet, and very strongly indeed, the opinion of Gladstone" Argyll "did not press the matter." This decision was regrettable for an unmistakable public warning by Britain would probably have induced Russia to be more cautious in Central Asia and convinced the Afghans that they could rely on British support in the event of an attack.

In the meantime, the Amir showed much dissatisfaction at the outcome of the Simla conference maintaining that Northbrook had only reiterated the promises made by Mayo and that consequently "all these conversations" with Nur Muhammad Shah had been unnecessary.[2] He also refused the request for a British mission to visit Afghanistan and maintained that Northbrook should have been aware of the "many objections" to it. It seems obvious from this reply that the Amir considered that Mayo had committed the Indian Government to respond to his appeals for help and that he

---

[1]Argyll to N., 9 Oct. 1873, ibid., vol. 9.
[2]Amir to N., 13 Nov. 1873, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 17, pp. 175-76.

was dismayed to find that this was not the case, and that Afghanistan had no absolute guarantee of assistance. His refusal to admit a British mission probably arose from a genuine fear that it might be attacked by fanatics, though he may have feared that it would be a prelude to an attempt to establish a permanent British Agent in Afghanistan.

Northbrook could not account for the reasons behind the Amir's "extraordinary letter" but feared that the Simla conference had "done more harm than good".[1] He thought it "would have been weak to take no notice of the unusual sarcastic, and somewhat insolent tone of the letter"[2] and sent a "stiff answer".[3] He reminded the Amir that he had been "perfectly unreserved and explicit" in his communications with Nur Muhammad Shah and that his promises of assistance were "designedly framed ... with the view of drawing the cords of friendship still closer and of giving Your Highness assurances of support even more explicit" than those given by Lawrence or Mayo.[4] Northbrook admitted that he was aware of the difficulties connected with foreign officers visiting Afghanistan but reminded the Amir that when turning down such a request from a friendly power it was customary to express regret.

Northbrook awaited the Amir's response with some

---

[1] N. to Argyll, 5 Feb. 1874, N.P., vol. 9.
[2] N. to Argyll, 23 Jan. 1874, ibid.
[3] N. to Salisbury, 26 Feb. 1874, ibid., vol. 11.
[4] N. to Amir, 23 Jan. 1874, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 17, p. 176.

anxiety for he was "apprehensive lest the Ameer might intend publicly to break with us."[1] But the Amir obviously had no such intention for shortly afterwards he sent to Peshawar for the 5,000 rifles which had been placed at his disposal.[2] The tone of his reply to Northbrook's letter was also conciliatory and though he still attached less importance to the assurances given at Simla than to those made earlier, he expressed a desire for continued friendship so that the territorial integrity of Afghanistan might be preserved.[3] However, relations between the two countries remained somewhat strained.

One reason for this was the Indian Government's refusal to accept the finality of the Amir's opposition to admitting British officers into Afghanistan. Shortly after the Simla conference, Douglas Forsyth, the leader of a British

---

[1] N. to Salisbury, 26 Feb. 1874, loc. cit.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Amir to N., 10 Apr. 1874, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 17, p. 853.

mission to Yarkand,[1] requested permission to return to India via Badakhshan, Wakhan, and Kabul. Forsyth had travelled to Yarkand by way of Kashmir and the Karakoram Pass, and, since the Government had scarcely any knowledge of the political condition or geographical features of north-eastern Afghanistan, it was anxious that Forsyth should be able to explore the area. However, the Amir objected to Forsyth's request and stressed that his party would be in particular danger because there was a growing threat of civil strife within Afghanistan.[2] As much as Northbrook wanted Forsyth to return via Afghanistan he did not think that the Amir "was wrong in his refusal, for the

---

[1]Forsyth had spent the winter of 1873-74 in Yarkand on a mission aimed at furthering the efforts begun in Mayo's time to establish British influence there. In 1869 Prince Gortchakov had virtually acknowledged that the territory lay within the British sphere of influence, and, when an envoy from Yarkand which came to Calcutta early in 1873 expressed a desire for a British mission to visit his country in order to conclude a commercial treaty and to discuss the exchange of representatives, Northbrook agreed. The ensuing British mission negotiated a treaty similar to one concluded between Russia and Yarkand in 1872 and gathered much useful political and geographical information on that region of Central Asia. Although Northbrook attached considerable importance to preserving the independence of Yarkand and hoped that the establishment of British diplomatic influence there would help to achieve that object, he declined to give 'material assistance' to Yarkand, and withdrew the British representative who had been sent there when it became clear that the ruler, Yakub Beg, did not want him to remain. Relations with Yarkand during this period have been described in considerable detail by G.J. Alder in British India's Northern Frontier, 1865-1895, ch. 2, though he exaggerates the extent to which Northbrook was prepared to intervene there.

[2]Kabul Agent to Peshawar Commissioner, 11 Apr. 1874, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 17, pp. 854-55.

reasons he gave were certainly not mere excuses."[1] Although Northbrook did not press the Amir to reverse his decision, the fact that the request had been made probably irritated him.

Further tension arose over the Amir's choice of a successor. There were two principal contenders -- Yakub Khan, the Governor of Herat and one of his elder sons, and Abdulla Jan, his youngest son. Although Northbrook made no attempt to influence the choice, he hoped that Yakub would be selected, believing that he would be the most competent to prevent civil war following the Amir's death.[2] But his views were kept secret and the Amir, who mistrusted Yakub, announced in November 1873 that Abdulla Jan would succeed him. He informed the Indian Government of his decision but, much to Northbrook's relief, did not ask for recognition of the appointment. In its reply the Government expressed "no opinion as to the wisdom of the step" and deliberately used the same vague language which had been used in 1858 in answer to Dost Muhammad's announcement of the selection of Sher Ali.[3] The Government was probably wise in not committing itself to support a candidate whose accession was likely to be followed by civil war. But its reply must have been discouraging to

---

[1] N. to Forsyth , 14 May 1874, N.P., vol. 15.
[2] N. to Argyll, 23 Oct. and 19 Dec. 1873, ibid., vol. 9.
[3] Indian Govt. to S.S., 23 Jan. 1874, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 17.

Sher Ali, whose own struggle for succession might have been less prolonged had he received British support.

As Northbrook had anticipated, the Amir's choice strained relations between Herat and Kabul. Yakub refused to recognize Abdulla Jan as heir apparent and reports spread that he was preparing to contest the issue.[1] But instead of fighting he asked the Amir to give him perpetual control over Herat. Sher Ali, however, refused to do this and suggested that Yakub come to Kabul to discuss the situation.[2] Yakub agreed after receiving a guarantee from the Amir's agents that he would be allowed to return to Herat after ten days and that he would not have to do homage to Abdulla Jan.[3] The Amir apparently had not authorized his agents to give these guarantees and did not consider himself bound by them. Shortly after Yakub arrived in Kabul, Sher Ali placed him in custody. Northbrook thought the Amir was guilty of a breach of faith in not observing the guarantees given by his own agents, and feared that his action would lead to civil war. Moreover, the Indian Government had used its influence in 1871 to bring about a temporary reconciliation between Yakub and Sher Ali and felt obliged to intervene on this occasion.[4]

---

[1]Kabul diary, 24-26 Mar. 1874, ibid., p. 801.
[2]Kabul diary, 14-16 Apr. 1874, ibid., p. 864.
[3]Telegram, Peshawar Commissioner to Indian Govt., 12 Nov. 1874, ibid., vol. 19, p. 410.
[4]Indian Govt. to S.S., 20 Nov. 1874, ibid.

Through its Commissioner at Peshawar it instructed the Kabul Agent to inform Sher Ali that

> the Viceroy ... desires strongly to urge His Highness to observe the conditions under which the Sirdar has come to Cabul. By so doing the Ameer will maintain his good name and the friendship of the British Government. The Viceroy would be glad to receive early assurances to this effect.[1]

However, the Amir, probably fearing that if Yakub returned to Herat he would try to establish his independence, refused to release him. He expressed surprise over the Indian Government's interference in a quarrel between a father and his disaffected son but hoped that friendship between the two countries would increase.[2] Northbrook considered the reply "unobjectionable in tone"[3] and, though it constituted a diplomatic defeat, he abstained from further interference probably fearing it would only make matters worse.

The deterioration in Indo-Afghan relations caused considerable concern in official circles. During the latter part of 1874 Northbrook admitted that there was much that was "unsatisfactory and puzzling" in the Amir's behaviour.[4] Sir Richard Pollock, the Commissioner of Peshawar, thought the Government should indicate its

---

[1]Telegram, Indian Govt. to Peshawar Commissioner, 17 Nov. 1874, ibid., p. 411.
[2]Kabul Agent to Peshawar Commissioner, 14 Dec. 1874, ibid., vol. 1, p. 17.
[3]N. to Salisbury, 1 Jan. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[4]N. to Davies, 22 Oct. 1974, ibid., vol. 16.

displeasure by withdrawing its 'native' Agent from Kabul,[1] and Sir Henry Davies, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, considered that such a measure might "bring the Ameer to his bearings".[2] Northbrook, however, declined to do this probably fearing that it would only increase tension. He realized that the Amir was disappointed at not receiving an unconditional guarantee of support, but did not think that he was really hostile. He was confident that as long as the Amir was satisfied that the British had no designs on his territory he would rely on them rather than turn to the Russians for support. Northbrook therefore resolved to continue to treat the Amir with patience.

This objective was fully supported by Gladstone's Government, which opposed assuming extensive commitments in Central Asia. Many Conservatives, on the other hand, demanded a more energetic policy in Central Asia to counter Russia's expansion. Northbrook strongly disagreed with these views and it was on these grounds that he was chiefly apprehensive of a change of Government. In 1873 he confided to a friend that he hoped the Liberals would remain in power since they were "very sound upon the Russia in Asia questions and not likely to urge upon us here any active line of policy, which would ... not be unlikely to

---

[1]Pollock to Thornton, 17 Oct. 1874, enc. in Davies to N., 19 Oct. 1874, ibid.
[2]Davies to N., 29 Oct. 1874, ibid.

lead the country into a repetition of the disastrous schemes which led to the Afghan war."[1] Nor was Northbrook's view that a Conservative Government would introduce a more active policy unfounded for shortly after taking office Salisbury began expressing great scepticism over established policy towards Afghanistan. In June 1874 he wrote to Northbrook:

> Have you entirely satisfied yourself of the truth of the orthodox doctrine that our interest is to have a strong and independent Afghanistan? My impression is that, if ever you get it, it will turn against you. I have many misgivings as to the wisdom of making the friendliness of the Ameer the pivot of our policy. If with our help he subdues rebels, and accumulates warlike stores, and fills his treasury, and drills his people, perhaps some day he may fancy, without our help, adding to these blessings the loot of Hindostan.[2]

But Salisbury's principal concern was not the military threat which Afghanistan alone might pose to the Indian Empire. Rather his great fear was that Russia might establish a dominant position in Afghanistan.[3] Under existing circumstances, Salisbury considered that this was a real possibility, for, having failed to obtain unconditional guarantees from the British, he thought that the Amir might turn to Russia for support. If he did so Salisbury was sure that the Russians, notwithstanding their assurances not to interfere in Afghanistan, would come to his aid. To prevent this he was determined to establish

---

[1] N. to Fortescue, 24 Apr. 1873, ibid., vol. 21/2.
[2] Salisbury to N., 19 June 1874, ibid., vol. 11.
[3] Salisbury to N., 19 Nov. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

a "closer hold on the Amir".[1] The first step was to place British Agents in the country.

Since 1857 the Indian Government had had a 'native' Agent attached to the Amir's Court at Kabul. The present Agent, Ata Muhammad Khan, had been appointed during Lawrence's administration. Since he had been in Afghanistan for such a long time there were some doubts about where his loyalty lay. Salisbury maintained that he was the "particular friend" of the Amir and looked to him for "wealth and honour".[2] Sir Robert Montgomery, a member of the India Council who adhered to the Lawrence school of foreign policy, believed that the Agent was loyal to the British and had received few favours from the Amir.[3] There was, however, fairly general agreement among officials that to be certain of receiving full and accurate information on happenings in Central Asia it would be desirable to have a British Agent in Afghanistan.

The question of such an appointment was raised in 1873 when the Russian conquest of Khiva seemed imminent. At that time Argyll admitted that it might be advantageous to have an Agent at Herat, if "he would be safe there".[4] He asked Northbrook for his opinion. Northbrook's first reaction was favourable. "I am inclined to think," he

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 5 Nov. 1874, ibid., vol. 11.
[2]Memo., undated, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 19, p. 410g.
[3]Memo., 23 Dec. 1874, ibid., p. 401p.
[4]Argyll to N., 14 Feb. 1873, N.P., vol. 9.

wrote to a member of the India Council, "it would be a good thing" for "we should get reliable information instead of the rubbish which now comes."[1] He decided to raise the question at the Simla conference, though he was already less certain of the merits of the project. "It seems to me," he wrote, "that to send an English officer there would be somewhat to depart from our present policy, and might possibly involve us too much in Affghan internal affairs."[2] Nevertheless, Northbrook still thought there would be advantages in having a representative at Herat provided the Amir cordially supported the appointment. He therefore discussed the matter with Nur Muhammad Shah who personally favoured the idea but had no authority to settle the question.[3] Northbrook hoped that the British mission which he proposed to send to Afghanistan to survey the country's boundaries would be able to raise the question with the Amir himself. However, when the Amir opposed this mission, Northbrook saw little immediate prospect of his accepting British Agents.

Salisbury, who came into office at this juncture, was not prepared to let the matter drop. In an early letter to Northbrook he suggested the advisability of having "agents unavowed -- if avowed, cannot be had -- both at

---

[1] N. to Rawlinson, 14 Mar. 1873, ibid., vol. 21/2.
[2] N. to Rawlinson, 9 June 1873, ibid.
[3] N. to Rawlinson, 18 Aug. 1873, ibid.

Herat and at Cabul, so that you may know the intended proceedings of both the Ameer and his son."[1] Failing to get any support from Northbrook for this suggestion, he urged the necessity of obtaining reliable information on strategic routes into Afghanistan. "I would at least press you," he wrote, "to perfect your knowledge of the strategic conditions of any military movement you may be called upon to make, either to Quettah or Herat."[2] Salisbury thought that such an advance might be necessary if the Russians continued to press southward. In December 1874 Salisbury received "information of a reliable character" indicating first, that the Russian authorities in Turkistan were constantly urging upon the Emperor "proposals of a more or less warlike character", and, second, that "General Kauffmann was anxious to send a scientific traveller by Balkh and Cabul to Peshawur ... to survey the country."[3] Although the St. Petersburg authorities had not yet yielded to this pressure, Salisbury was alarmed. He did not think that there would be an immediate advance by Russia, but resolved that steps to strengthen the British hold on Afghanistan could be delayed no longer. He decided to formally instruct Northbrook to place a British Agent either at Herat or Kandahar, Kabul being "too fanatical

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 22 May 1874, ibid., vol. 11.
[2]Salisbury to N., 17 July 1874, ibid.
[3]Salisbury to N., 11 Dec. 1874, ibid.

to be quite safe."[1] Because he attached great importance to this measure and realized it would be disliked by Northbrook, he sought the Prime Minister's support before issuing orders. Disraeli warmly endorsed Salisbury's decision. He wrote:

> I have always been strongly in favour of our government being in Afghan, tho' not unaware of the difficulties and dangers. The necessity, however, outweighs everything. It is a question, whether we should not have an agent at Candihar and Herat.[2]

The Indian Council supported Salisbury's proposal and in a despatch in January 1875 he issued the following order:

> I ... instruct ... you to take measures, with as much expedition as the circumstances of the case permit, for procuring the assent of the Ameer to the establishment of a British Agency at Herat. When this is accomplished it may be desirable to take a similar step with regard to Candahar.[3]

Salisbury maintained that the Amir had previously expressed his willingness to have an Agent at Herat and did not think he would object "if his intentions are still loyal." But if he raised difficulties, Salisbury advised the Government to remind him that the more complete and reliable information it had on happenings in Central Asia the more capable it would be of ensuring the integrity of Afghanistan.

In the hope of gaining Northbrook's agreement to this measure, Salisbury advised him to use his own "discretion

---

[1]Salisbury to Disraeli, 2 Jan. 1875, Disraeli P., B/XX/Ce 268.

[2]Disraeli to Salisbury, 6 Jan. 1875, Salisbury P., Beaconsfield collection.

[3]S.S. to Indian Govt., 22 Jan. 1875, Pol. and Sec. Despatches to India, vol. 1.

... as to the mode and the exact time" of putting it into force.[1] Since Northbrook considered that it might be desirable to have a representative at Herat if the Amir cordially favoured it, he regarded the timing of a request of vital importance. He considered that the recent difficulties with the Amir made it inadvisable to ask him to accept a British Agent at that time, but thought that a favourable opportunity might later occur.[2] He therefore asked Salisbury precisely how long the Indian Government might delay carrying out his instructions. Northbrook was informed that no action need be taken for three or four months.[3] Although he had probably hoped for a longer delay, this at least gave him time to consult officials experienced in Afghan affairs. During a visit to north-western India in March he conferred with Davies, Pollock, and other leading Punjab officials and with Nawab Gholam Hassan Khan, former Agent at Kabul. They all agreed that the Amir would intensely dislike having a British Agent at Herat and that it would be a mistake to force an appointment on him.[4] The result of these discussions was to confirm Northbrook's objections to the proposed policy.

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 7 Jan. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2]N. to Salisbury, 29 Jan. 1875, ibid.; and Telegram, 18 Feb. 1875, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 4, p. 13.
[3]Telegram, Salisbury to N., 23 Feb. 1875, ibid.
[4]Enc. to Indian Govt. to S.S., 7 June 1875, ibid.; and N. to Salisbury, 26 Mar. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.

At Simla he brought the whole question before the Executive Council which prepared a firm rejoinder to Salisbury's despatch.[1]

The Indian Government questioned a number of Salisbury's basic assumptions. It pointed out that there was no evidence in the official records to show that the Amir had previously indicated readiness to accept a British Agent at Herat. It reminded Salisbury that Mayo had emphatically stated after the Ambala conference that no Residents were to be placed in the country. The only evidence to support Salisbury's contention was given by Captain H. Grey who had acted as interpreter at that conference. Grey claimed that the "Ameer did freely consent to the appointment of European British officers in Balkh, Herat, or anywhere but actually in Cabul."[2] The Indian Government did not disbelieve this statement but was convinced that the Amir's intimation "was intended to be contingent either upon the receipt of far more substantial assistance than was promised ... at the Umballa conferences, or upon the conclusion of a Dynastic Treaty."[3] Since these concessions had not been granted and there was no record to support Grey's statement, the Government decided that it would be unjustified in requesting the Amir to accept a Resident on the assumption that he had previously agreed to it.

---

[1]Indian Govt. to S.S., 7 June 1875, loc. cit.
[2]Grey to Thornton, 29 Mar. 1875, enc. in ibid.
[3]Indian Govt. to S.S., 7 June 1875, loc. cit.

The Indian Government also disagreed with Salisbury's inference that any objection by the Amir to the appointment of an Agent at Herat would indicate that he was disloyal to the British. It pointed out that there was a strong anti-British faction among the sirdars of Afghanistan and maintained that the Amir's own position was not sufficiently secure for him to risk offending them. The Government realized that there was a possibility that the lives of British officers might be endangered by acts of fanatics and thought the Amir might be genuinely worried on this account. "There is probably also the apprehension," it wrote, "that the permanent location of British officers in Afghanistan would bring to light proceedings which would be condemned by our standard of right and wrong, and might find their way into the public press, of which the Ameer feels a great dread."[1] In short, the Government believed that the Amir might object to having a British Agent in his country and still be loyal.

The Government's unanimous conclusions, as far as the advisability of carrying out Salisbury's instructions was concerned, were pungently stated by Northbrook in a private letter:

> All those who are best qualified to form an opinion say that the Ameer would strongly object to the presence of British officers in Affghanistan, and this view is confirmed by his proceedings since I have been

---

[1]Ibid.

> in India. We think it would be very desirable to place a British officer at Herat, if it can be arranged with the cordial consent of the Ameer, but that if done against his will under pressure, the officer will have no real power of being of use, and his presence is as likely as not to occasion a breach some day between us and Affghanistan.
>
> Unless, therefore, it is the desire of the Government at home to change the policy with regard to Affghanistan, and to show less desire to keep on cordial terms than has hitherto been thought advisable, we cannot recommend a formal announcement to the Ameer that we desire the establishment of a British Agent at Herat.[1]

Instead of putting immediate pressure on the Amir, the Government recommended that "advantage be taken of the first favourable opportunity that his own action or other circumstances may present for the purpose of sounding his disposition and of representing to him the benefits which would be derived by Afghanistan from the proposed arrangement."[2] It believed that such an opportunity was certain to occur whenever the Russians advanced to Merv, since that would undoubtedly alarm the Amir and induce him to appeal to the British for help. In that case the Government thought it would be desirable to enter into a treaty agreement with the Amir. The establishment of a British Resident at Herat would be a "natural consequence" of such a treaty.

Northbrook had little hope that these arguments would induce Salisbury to alter his policy. It was true that

---

[1] N. to Salisbury, 20 May 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2] Indian Govt. to S.S., 7 June 1875, loc. cit.

shortly after receiving Salisbury's despatch Northbrook had stated that he did not think they would differ about Afghanistan if they "could have a good talk about ... policy there, and quietly discuss the best course to take."[1] But this optimism diminished following Salisbury's critical response to the advance warnings which Northbrook gave him of the probable nature of the Indian Government's official reply. Salisbury was unimpressed by the news that the officers whom Northbrook had consulted all objected to forcing a Resident upon the Amir and suggested that they were prejudiced by "the disasters of 1842"[2] which had "entered like iron into their souls."[3] He maintained that Britain's position with respect to Afghanistan was "both dangerous and humiliating" and warned against being "seduced into solving a difficult question by the attractive alternative of doing nothing."[4] Salisbury suspected the Amir of disloyalty and thought that as Russia expanded southward she would try to "make herself mistress" of Afghanistan, "not by force of arms, which would be costly and hazardous, but by 'influence'". Under these circumstances he warned "we cannot leave the keys of the gate [into India] in the hands of a warder of more than doubtful integrity, who insists ... that his movements shall not

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 1 Apr. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2]The first Afghan War.
[3]Salisbury to N., 25 Mar. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[4]Ibid.; and Salisbury to N., 23 Apr. 1875, ibid.

be observed." These statements convinced Northbrook of Salisbury's unshakable determination to place a Resident in Afghanistan.

By the summer of 1875 he and Salisbury had not only expressed their disagreement on this question but had frankly declared their respective support for the opposing schools of foreign policy. In November of the previous year Salisbury had sent Northbrook memoranda on Central Asia by Sir Bartle Frere and Sir Henry Rawlinson, the India Council's foremost advocates of the forward policy. Salisbury thought that Rawlinson was "going too fast" but was more in accord with Frere.[1] A little later he sent a memorandum by Lawrence and, although Salisbury disclaimed any intention of initiating a forward policy, he thought that Lawrence painted its dangers "a little too darkly".[2] Northbrook, on the other hand, largely agreed with Lawrence's views and expressed great apprehension over the influence which Frere and Rawlinson were exerting for a more active foreign policy.[3] Salisbury retorted that he was not influenced by them,[4] but his actions belied him. Northbrook was particularly angry when, in the spring of 1875, Rawlinson published a book on Central

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 5 Nov. 1874, ibid., vol. 11.
[2]Salisbury to N., 20 Nov. 1874, ibid.
[3]N. to Salisbury, 18 Dec. 1874, and 1 Apr. 1875, ibid., vols. 11 and 12 respectively.
[4]Salisbury to N., 30 Apr. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

Asian affairs,[1] criticizing the Amir and Russia and urging a more vigorous British policy. Northbrook was"astounded" at his liberal use of "official and confidential documents" and feared the publication would have "a very injurious effect upon our relations with Russia and Afghanistan."[2] "I have been more annoyed by [it], " Northbrook informed Salisbury, "than by anything that has occurred since I have been in India, and I wish with all my heart you had prevented the use ... of papers which have not been made public."[3] Northbrook feared that it was only a question of time before Salisbury ordered him to implement the instructions of his January despatch. "The state of public opinion at home is such," he wrote to Mallet, "that I cannot but be apprehensive of a policy being adopted with which I cannot concur."[4] It was no doubt partly to avoid this that he informed Salisbury in September 1875 that he wished to resign from office. Northbrook did not refer to the difference over Afghanistan in his letter of resignation, but a few days later expressed his grave concern on this question. "My firm opinion," he declared, "is that to do anything to force him [the Amir] to receive Agents of ours in his country against his will is likely to have an opposite effect to that which you

---

[1] England and Russia in the East.
[2] N. to Salisbury, 1 Apr. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[3] Ibid.
[4] N. to Mallet, 23 Aug. 1875, ibid., vol. 23.

desire, and to subject us to the risk of another unnecessary and costly war in Afghanistan before many years are over."[1]

However, these warnings had little effect on Disraeli's Government which viewed the prospects of Russian expansion in Europe and Central Asia with increasing hostility. The threatened "explosion of the Eastern question" caused by a revolt in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1875, bringing with it the possibility of a Russo-British conflict in the Balkans, convinced the Conservatives that measures should be taken at once to strengthen the British position in Central Asia by preventing any possibility of Russian interference in Afghanistan.[2] At Disraeli's suggestion, he and Salisbury met to decide upon the policy to be pursued. The result was a firm reiteration of the earlier instructions for the establishment of British Agents in Afghanistan. Undoubtedly convinced that the Amir would reject outright any straightforward request for the appointment of a permanent British Resident, Salisbury advised that the first step in establishing closer relations should be "to induce him to receive a temporary embassy in his capital."[3] Although the real object of the embassy would be to establish a permanent mission in the country, Salisbury suggested that "there would be many advantages in

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 30 Sept. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.
[2]Salisbury to N., 12 and 19 Nov. 1875, ibid.
[3]S.S. to Indian Govt., 19 Nov. 1875, Pol. and Sec. Despatches to India, vol. 1.

ostensibly directing it to some object of smaller political interest, which it will not be difficult for your Excellency to find, or, if need be, to create."[1] In a private letter he suggested that the offer of a limited recognition[2] of Abdulla Jan might serve as a good pretext for the mission.[3] Salisbury ended his despatch by ordering the Indian Government, "without any delay" that could reasonably be avoided, "to find some occasion" for sending a mission to Kabul, and to press its reception upon the Amir.[4]

Northbrook concluded that Salisbury's despatch was intended "to lay the foundation of a change of policy in our relations with Afghanistan, and possibly also with Khelat and other neighbouring States."[5] His immediate reaction was to warn Salisbury, in the strongest terms, of the dangers of such a policy.

> ... Looking at our policy in Afghanistan mainly from an Indian point of view, I entertain a very decided opinion that to interfere more than we have hitherto done would be a serious error, and I ... hope that the Cabinet will very seriously weigh both the consequences which may follow from such interference, and the opinions of those who have the best knowledge of Afghanistan (at least in later years), before they abandon the policy which has been steadily followed since the Afghan war.[6]

---

[1] Ibid.
[2] One which would not bind the British Government to fight for him.
[3] Salisbury to N., 19 Nov. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[4] S.S. to Indian Govt., 19 Nov. 1875, loc. cit.
[5] N. to Salisbury, 17 Dec. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[6] Ibid.

Northbrook was determined not to carry out such a policy during his few remaining months in India, and indeed, as he pointed out, little could be done in that direction until the home Government answered two important questions -- first, "Are we prepared to undertake to defend him, without any conditions, against attack from without?" and second, "Are we prepared to comply with his demands for funds to fortify Herat and keep his army in a state of efficiency?"[1] It had been clear from the Ambala and Simla conferences that the Amir would never willingly accept British Agents unless he received guarantees of unconditional and large scale assistance. Moreover, Northbrook considered that the Indian Government could not give further recognition to Abdulla Jan without committing itself to supporting him in any subsequent war of succession. Since Salisbury had not made it clear how far the British Government intended to commit itself in Afghanistan, Northbrook requested clarification on these points. At the same time he declared that if the Cabinet adhered to its proposed policy, he would "be glad to be relieved from the task of carrying [it] out."[2]

The Executive Council fully endorsed Northbrook's views and in an official letter shortly before his departure emphasized that there was no evidence that Russia

---

[1] Ibid.
[2] N. to Salisbury, 7 Jan. 1876, ibid.

intended to interfere in Afghanistan. It was true that the Russian Governor of Turkistan occasionally corresponded with the Amir. But the Indian Government was kept informed of these letters by its Kabul Agent and, since they were confined to expressions of friendship, did not object to them. One of these letters was delivered at Kabul in September 1875 by a small party of 'natives' from Russian Turkistan, but, according to the Kabul Agent, they did not receive a very friendly reception and stayed only a few days.[1] The Indian Government therefore attached no significance to the visit. Even if Russia broke her promises not to interfere in Afghanistan, the Government was confident that she would not be able to intimidate the Amir since submission to her would be "opposed to his personal character and to the feelings and traditions of his race."[2] It admitted that during the last few years the Amir had assumed "a colder attitude towards us than we should desire", but maintained that for the reasons explained in its letter of June 1875 this was not altogether inexplicable. The Amir certainly showed no disposition to trust Russia in preference to the British. He was alarmed when Russian forces again began to move forward in the latter part of 1875 and, through the Kabul Agent, informed the

---

[1]Kabul diary, 3-6 Sept. 1875, Pol. and Sec. Letters from India, vol. 6, pp. 233-34.

[2]Indian Govt. to S.S., 28 Jan. 1876, ibid., vol. 7.

Indian Government of his great dread of their approach to the Oxus.[1] In fact during Northbrook's last year in office there was some improvement in British-Afghan relations. Although he still showed no desire for the money offered him at the Simla conference, in March 1875 the Amir asked for the 15,000 rifles and ammunition which had been promised him.[2] Anxious to assure the Amir of its continued friendship, the Indian Government informed him that the arms were at Peshawar and that he could have them at any time. Shortly afterwards Afghan officials took delivery of the arms, the receipt of which pleased the Amir immensely.[3]

Nor did the Indian Government consider there was much likelihood that Russia would succeed in establishing a position in Afghanistan by intriguing with factions disloyal to the Amir. It maintained that Sher Ali had consolidated his power in a manner unprecedented since the time of Dost Muhammad. This claim was no exaggeration. Following the imprisonment of Yakub Khan, his adherents at Herat had surrendered to the Amir's army without a fight. Shortly afterwards a rebellion broke out in Maimena but there, too, the Amir's forces, strengthened by the recent supply of arms from India, were steadily regaining control. The Government did not overlook the possibility of border clashes, but pointed out that since the Ambala conference

---

[1]Kabul diary, 1-4 Oct. 1875, ibid., vol. 6, p. 504.
[2]Kabul diary, 9-11 Mar. 1875, ibid., vol. 3, pp. 938-39.
[3]Kabul diary, 29 June-5 July 1875, ibid., vol. 5, p. 27.

the Amir had consistently followed British advice not to interfere with neighbouring states.

The Indian Government was sure that Salisbury's policy, instead of leading to closer ties with the Amir, would result in a rupture in British-Afghan relations. It concluded its letter with this warning:

> We are convinced that a patient adherence to the policy adopted towards Afghanistan by Lord Canning, Lord Lawrence, and Lord Mayo, which it has been our earnest endeavour to maintain, presents the greatest promise of the eventual establishment of our relations with the Ameer on a satisfactory footing; and we deprecate, as involving serious danger to the peace of Afghanistan and to the interests of the British Empire in India, the execution, under present circumstances, of the instructions conveyed in your Lordship's despatch.[1]

However, these warnings were in vain. Although Salisbury did not force Northbrook to carry out the home Government's policy during his last months in office, he remained determined to place a British Resident in Afghanistan. Lytton was selected for the Viceroyalty partly because he was thought to be well suited to introduce a forward policy. Before he left for India, Salisbury gave him secret instructions to take immediate steps to send a mission to Kabul, suggesting that it should visit Kalat en route in an effort to make British authority felt there as well as in Afghanistan.[2] Lytton vigorously undertook this task,

---

[1] Indian Govt. to S.S., 28 Jan. 1876, loc. cit.

[2] Indian Govt. to S.S., 28 Feb. 1876, P.P., vol. lvi (1878-79), No. C.2190. These were issued by Salisbury without consulting his Council.

with results which fully confirmed Northbrook's predictions. A few months after his assumption of office, he requested the Amir to receive a temporary British mission. The Amir refused the request but sent representatives to India to discuss relations between the two countries. During these discussions it was revealed that, although the Amir was dissatisfied by the Indian Government's treatment during the past few years, he was still friendly toward the British and desired a permanent alliance guaranteeing him and his successors against internal revolt and foreign aggression. Lytton was willing to give greater guarantees to the Amir than had formerly been made but only on condition that the Amir first received a British Resident.[1] But the Amir, alarmed by the British occupation of Kalat[2] and fearing that his independence might also be jeopardized, refused. Consequently, Lytton severed all diplomatic links with Afghanistan. In the meantime, war between Russia and Britain over the Eastern Question became more and more imminent. As a counterpoise to Disraeli's threat to mobilize troops against Russia in the Dardanelles, Russia moved forces to the Oxus and decided to send General Stolietov on a mission to Kabul. The Amir was as anxious

---

[1]B. Prasad, The Foundations of India's Foreign Policy, 1860-1882, pp. 194-97.

[2]Lytton took advantage of the success of Sandeman's mission to Kalat to conclude a new treaty with the Khan assuring virtual British domination of the country.

to avoid domination by Russia as by Britain and agreed to the mission with great reluctance. Indeed, he had little choice but to accept since the breach with Lytton meant that he could not rely on British support in resisting Russian demands. Lytton regarded the Amir's acceptance of the Russian mission as a hostile act and resolved to send a British mission. When the Amir objected to receiving it, Lytton presented him with an ultimatum. The Amir's reply, agreeing to the mission, did not arrive in India until a few days after the deadline given by the Government and by that time British forces had already entered Afghanistan. They soon overcame resistance and, following the death of Sher Ali in February 1879, the Indian Government concluded a treaty with the new Amir, Yakub Khan, ensuring a strong British hold over the country. For Lytton and the Conservative Government this was a moment of triumph vindicating their substitution of a forward policy for the non-expansionist and conciliatory policy of Northbrook. But this triumph was shortlived. A few months after the signing of the treaty, the Afghans showed their determination to regain their independence by massacring the entire British mission in Kabul. To avenge this the Indian Government was obliged to undertake a second costly campaign against Afghanistan. The Afghan policy upon which Lytton had embarked with such fervour was in shambles.

The steady unfolding of the forward policy was a

matter of the deepest regret to Northbrook. During his first year in England he had been so hopeful that his final protests had induced the Conservatives to modify their policy that he studiously avoided "even the appearance of any attack" on them.[1] However, following the occupation of Kalat and the progressive worsening of relations with Afghanistan as a result of British insistence upon placing a Resident there, Northbrook began to protest. His attacks became more frequent and forthright following the actual outbreak of hostilities and the publication in Parliamentary Papers of much of the official correspondence which had taken place during his term. While the Government's real apprehensions were over the Russian expansion, Northbrook maintained that it had blundered its way into a war with Afghanistan of which "the justice" was "doubtful" and from which it could "derive no advantage".[2] Northbrook regarded the war as "the direct outcome of European difficulties" and for that reason thought that the cost "should be borne by England".[3] He therefore regretted the decision of the Government, endorsed by Parliament, "to put the whole cost of the war on India" and was deeply concerned over its effect on Indian public opinion which considered that Lytton had brought the Afghan war upon himself and

---

[1] N. to Lytton, 6 Sept. 1877, N.P., vol. 18.
[2] N. to Gladstone, 28 Oct. 1878, Gladstone P., Add. MSS. 44266.
[3] N. to Temple, 18 Dec. 1878, Temple P., vol. 12.

was outraged at the suggestion that India should bear the cost.[1] Northbrook was particularly angry when the Conservatives attempted to justify their policies by throwing all the blame for the Afghan imbroglio upon him and Gladstone's Ministry, maintaining that if Sher Ali's requests for assistance had been fully granted in 1873 and if an effort had been made early in 1875 to carry out the orders for the appointment of British Agents in the country the subsequent difficulties would never have occurred. These charges were largely unfair and Northbrook, Argyll, and Gladstone strongly denied them in Parliament and on public platforms. It was true that the Amir was dissatisfied by the assurances he had been given in 1873, but there can be little doubt that nothing short of an unconditional guarantee of support without corresponding infringements upon his independence would have satisfied him, and this even the Conservatives had never been prepared to grant. Moreover, though relations with Afghanistan had been somewhat strained during his term, Northbrook had certainly not alienated the Amir, who, during the first year of Lytton's rule, revealed his distrust of Russia and his willingness for a closer alliance with the British. Had the Government followed Northbrook's advice, and, instead of first insisting on a Resident and thereby convincing the Amir that it had designs on his territory, offered him more

---

[1] Ibid.

assistance as the Russians approached, British-Afghan relations might have been placed on a strong footing. The danger of waiting for the Amir's willing consent before placing a British Agent in the country was that in the meantime Russia might gain a foothold there. However, if the Amir had been satisfied that the British had no designs on his territory, he probably would have turned to them at the first suggestion of Russian interference. Under these circumstances it is hardly likely that Russia would have persisted. If she did, Northbrook and probably most leading Liberals would have supported sending troops into Afghanistan to aid the Amir. In fact, as Northbrook and other Liberals pointed out, the war with Afghanistan resulted largely from the imperial ambitions of Lytton and the Conservative Government. It was chiefly because of his strong objections to their foreign policy in Central Asia and elsewhere that Northbrook was anxious for the overthrow of the Conservatives and rejoiced at the Liberal victory of 1880.[1] No member of Gladstone's Cabinet was more anxious than Northbrook for complete British withdrawal from Afghanistan and few regretted more than he the changing pattern of international affairs whereby the general desire of European powers for imperial expansion brought Britain more and more into the competition for new

---

[1]N. to Temple, 10 Apr. 1879, ibid.; and N. to Aitchison, 22 May 1880, N.P., vol. 19.

territory.

In Northbrook's time and since opinions have differed over the wisdom of the non-expansionist policy pursued by the Indian Government in the two decades following the Mutiny. The adherents of this policy no doubt underestimated to some extent the importance of a strategic frontier line. From the military point of view there were forceful arguments in the long run for advancing the border in Kalat and it was perhaps inevitable that both the British and the Russians should push forward towards a more defensible frontier. Had the policy been merely one of indifference to developments on the frontier or to the possible threat from other great powers, as Lytton and many Conservatives alleged it was, there would have been strong grounds for condemning it. However, as we have seen, such allegations were unjustified particularly as far as Northbrook's policy was concerned for he sought, not without success, to promote British influence in the frontier states, and, while not alarmed by the Russian expansion, he was anxious to reach a clear agreement with her on Central Asia -- a measure which he continued to advocate strongly in subsequent years. There was no doubt, too, much truth in the view of Northbrook and other adherents of the non-expansionist policy that British security in India rested not upon 'a scientific frontier' or a larger army but upon the good government of the country. "Depend

upon it," Northbrook wrote some years after his retirement, "if we govern India well and economically, and give fair consideration to the legitimate aspirations of the educated Natives for employment in the administration of their country we may look with perfect calmness on any projects of Russian advance."[1] From the strong and widespread condemnation of Lytton's expansionist policy by Indian public opinion there can be no doubt that his policy did much to strain Indo-British relations, and that this could have been largely avoided had the more conciliatory and less aggressive policy followed by Northbrook been continued.

---

[1]N. to Ponsonby, 7 Aug. 1884, ibid., Family collection.

Chapter VIII

RESIGNATION

Northbrook, who believed that his policy of 'steady government' was best suited to Indian conditions in the 1870's, had originally hoped to remain in office for the normal five year term. However, he did not fulfil this ambition, but asked to be relieved after serving only four years. The reason for his premature resignation was a subject of great controversy at the time and the disagreement has continued ever since. The Times of 6 January 1876, commenting on the announcement of Northbrook's retirement, stated that he had asked to be relieved because his health could not withstand another hot season. In India the Pioneer claimed that Northbrook, as a wealthy peer with a political career awaiting him at home, had grown tired of the responsibility of office.[1] Mallet, Northbrook's biographer, also attributed his resignation to private reasons, and claimed that he felt it his duty to his family to retire before the conclusion of his regular term. Others declared that the causes of his resignation were public rather than private. The Bengalee and Hindoo Patriot, writing shortly after the announcement of his retirement, attributed it to differences with

---

[1]Editorial, 6 Jan. 1876.

Salisbury, particularly over the tariff reforms.[1] This opinion was shared by a number of vernacular newspapers. At that time the public was unaware of Northbrook's disagreement with Salisbury on the Afghanistan policy. But when the official correspondence on this subject was published in Parliamentary Papers following the outbreak of the Afghan war, the Hindoo Patriot concluded that the principal reason for Northbrook's resignation was the "marked difference" with Salisbury on policy towards Afghanistan.[2] The Bengalee endorsed this view.[3] The private papers of Northbrook and other statesmen of the period have shed some new light on this problem.

If Northbrook's statements in his letter of resignation are accepted at their face value, the reasons for his early retirement were private. In a letter of September 1875, he asked to be relieved of his office in the spring of 1876 following the conclusion of the visit of the Prince of Wales.[4] "My reasons for making this request," he wrote, "are entirely private ones." He continued:

> ... I am sure that my duty to my family is to go home next spring unless there is a clear public duty to keep me in India for the full term of five years. ... I have tried to weigh it fairly, and I do not think that any such duty exists.

---

[1]Editorials, 5 Feb. and 6 Mar. 1876, respectively.
[2]Editorial, 3 Feb. 1879.
[3]Editorial, 27 Sept. 1879.
[4]N. to Salisbury, 12 Sept. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.

In none of his subsequent letters did Northbrook elaborate on the grounds for his resignation, though he later informed a distant relative and Member of Parliament that his retirement was not caused by disagreement with Salisbury.[1]

There is no evidence in Northbrook's own papers to suggest why he considered it his duty to his children, Francis and Emma, (both with him in India) to return to England in 1876. Other sources however suggest a reason. Salisbury, in October 1875, alleged that Northbrook was having "much trouble with his son at Simla."[2] Other rumours were also circulating for Lord George Hamilton reported that he had heard "that Miss Baring precipitated Lord N's departure" and that "his son ... had formed to some purpose an attachment with a married lady."[3] With no other evidence than this it is difficult to judge how intimately Northbrook's son had become involved with the lady. However, if a really serious love affair had developed it is probable that Salisbury or Hamilton would have said so or that the news would have leaked out in some other way. It seems more likely, therefore, that Francis Baring had merely formed a friendly relationship

---

[1]N. to Whitbread, 14 Apr. 1876, ibid., vol. 7.
[2]Salisbury to Disraeli, 10 Oct. 1875, Disraeli P., B/XX/Ce/59.
[3]Hamilton to Lytton, 17 Aug. 1876, Lytton P., vol. 517/2.

with a married woman. At any rate his behaviour was beginning to cause his father some disquiet,[1] for, about a week before his resignation, Northbrook informed a friend that he was bothered by private troubles.[2] It seems probable, therefore, that Northbrook's resignation was influenced by his son's behaviour.

Yet to resign such a high position as Viceroy of India solely on this account seems hardly credible. One wonders, for example, why Northbrook could not have sent his children home in the summer of 1876 just as he had done in 1874 when he himself had remained in Calcutta to supervise famine operations. In fact, Emma expected he would do that and informed her uncle that she and Francis would probably return to England in the spring of 1876.[3] Furthermore, Northbrook considered that it was wrong to resign a high office for minor personal reasons. In 1875 when he heard that the Governor of Madras was considering resignation because of a personal difficulty, Northbrook wrote:

> Unless from ill-health ... a public servant filling so important a position ought not to resign unless either he has reason to believe that he does not possess the confidence of those under whom he has to act, or he is directed to carry out a line of policy

---

[1]Northbrook had such a high sense of morality that he would have been disturbed if his son had developed even a liking for a married woman.

[2]N. to Clerk, 6 Sept. 1875, N.P., vol. 23.

[3]Emma to Grey, 19 Nov. 1875, ibid., Family collection.

> on matters of great consequence which he thinks to be so detrimental to the public interests that he cannot conscientiously be concerned in it.[1]

One cannot be certain of the extent to which Northbrook followed his own advice, but it is interesting to note that, while his health was not impaired, he had considerable grounds for believing that he did not possess the confidence of the Conservative Government and was apprehensive that he would be ordered to carry out important policies with which he disagreed.

In his letter of resignation Northbrook maintained that there were no serious problems confronting his administration -- a view which he reiterated some months later.[2] But these statements do not correspond with the actual conditions in the late summer of 1875 or with the views expressed in much of his other correspondence at that time. Writing to his uncle at the end of August, Northbrook expressed concern over the news that Salisbury disagreed with the tariff reforms and confessed that there was "plenty to think of."[3] About a week later he complained bitterly about the lack of support which he had received on Baroda and other issues. "It is as much as I can well manage," he stated, "to pull on against the collar with many troubles, public and private, on my back."[4] These

---

[1] N. to Lady Hobart, 16 June 1875, ibid., vol. 17.
[2] N. to Salisbury, 7 Jan. 1876, ibid., vol. 12.
[3] N. to Grey, 30 Aug. 1875, ibid., Family collection.
[4] N. to Clerk, 6 Sept. 1875, ibid., vol. 23.

two letters alone are sufficient to show that at the time of his resignation Northbrook was seriously concerned over public questions -- questions which centred around his relations with Salisbury and the home Government.

Some friction between the Government in India and in Britain was inevitable. Northbrook and Argyll had disagreed on a number of questions even though they were members of the same political party and were in basic accord on most important matters of policy. However, on the abolition of the income-tax, the principal issue on which they differed, Argyll gave in to Northbrook and in general left the direction of affairs to him. Besides, while the Liberals were in power, Northbrook had the added assurance that even if Argyll disapproved of his policy he could rely upon other close and influential friends in the Cabinet or the party to see that he was treated fairly. The accession of the Conservatives must therefore have given him a feeling of insecurity. However, he noted that Indian affairs were "quite apart from English politics" and promised to communicate with Salisbury "without any reserve."[1] Northbrook hoped in this way, and by acting with caution and forbearance in all matters affecting the relations between the two Governments, to avoid serious conflict. At first it seemed as if this would not be

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 27 Mar. 1874, ibid., vol. 11.

especially difficult since Salisbury too expressed a wish to avoid controversy. "I trust," he wrote to Northbrook, "that the change of Ministry will not be in any practical view perceptible to you."[1] Yet, Northbrook and Salisbury were soon at loggerheads. Within six months of the change of Government, Northbrook informed a friend that he differed from Salisbury "upon some first principles of Indian administration."[2] Northbrook did not explain his meaning, but a brief examination of the main disputes between him and Salisbury, some of which have already been discussed, will reveal the nature and importance of these differences.

By the time Salisbury took office Northbrook had already formulated very definite ideas on how India should be governed -- ideas based upon his former connection with Indian affairs. He firmly believed that the ordinary administration should be conducted largely in India and that the Governor-General and Council should be allowed the widest possible freedom, subject always to the overriding authority of the Secretary of State. Although the latter was not obliged by law to consult the Indian Government on matters affecting the administration or constitution, Northbrook was convinced that unless the matter was one of extreme urgency it was highly expedient that

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 25 Feb. 1874, ibid.
[2]N. to Halifax, 2 Oct. 1874, ibid., vol. 22.

such consultation should take place. Otherwise, serious controversy between the two Governments was almost inevitable. To Northbrook's deep satisfaction, Argyll had generally conformed with his views on how the administration should be conducted. Salisbury, however, came to the office with a reputation for being "somewhat wild and impulsive"[1] and with determination to master and control affairs. The news that he was "taking up many matters with great energy and with a strong tendency to prompt and decisive action"[2] probably filled Northbrook with a sense of foreboding.

The first trouble occurred over Salisbury's attempt to establish greater control over legislation in India. Salisbury was anxious to keep a close check upon the legislative as well as the executive acts of the Indian Government, but claimed that, following the dissolution of the India Law Commission in Argyll's time, "the Indian Legislative Council was left in a state which practically amounted to entire independence of England."[3] At the suggestion of Sir Henry Maine, the legal expert on the India Council, Salisbury resolved to curb that independence. Within a few weeks of taking office he instructed the Indian Government that, in future, before introducing a bill into the Legislative Council it should send him a

---

[1]Perry to N., 26 Feb. 1874, ibid.
[2]Mallet to N., 1 Apr. 1874, ibid.
[3]Speech, 14 Mar. 1876, Hansard, vol. 227.

proposed draft, with full explanation of the reasons for introducing it.[1] If a bill forwarded in this way and approved of by the Secretary of State was altered significantly during its subsequent passage through the Legislative Council, it was to be referred home again before receiving the sanction of the Governor-General. Only measures of "slight importance" or those "urgently requiring speedy enactment" could be exempted from these rules. In his despatch Salisbury did not reveal his strong antipathy towards the existing position of the Legislative Council, but maintained that the instructions were simply designed to prevent the need of exercising his power of disallowance -- a power difficult to use without damaging the authority of the Government in India. Even so Northbrook and his Executive Council were apprehensive that the rules "might lead to an interposition on the part of the Secretary of State in the ordinary legislative business of the Governor General in Council, which would be contrary to former practice and in itself inexpedient."[2] However, being anxious to avoid controversy with Salisbury on his first official proposal, Northbrook minimized his

---

[1] S.S. to Indian Govt., 31 Mar. 1874, P.P., vol. lvi (1876), No. 102.

[2] Indian Govt. to S.S., 17 Mar. 1876, ibid., No. C.1515.

objections to the rules.[1] He chose to interpret the despatch not in the light of its general restrictive tone but on the basis of its more agreeable passages. He noted that it was left to the discretion of the Governor-General to decide which measures were sufficiently urgent to be exempted from the instructions. Moreover, since Salisbury stated that he desired a return to the practice of the 1860's when there had been closer official consultation, Northbrook concluded that, in deciding whether to forward a particular bill, the Government was to be guided by precedent. Interpreted in this way the instructions were not very restrictive and the Government only objected to some of the details.[2] Although conflict was avoided for the time being Northbrook was apprehensive that the instructions might lead to future difficulty.

A disagreement of more immediate seriousness occurred over an amendment to the India Councils Act. Northbrook was surprised to learn by Reuter's news service in June 1874 that the Government had introduced a bill into Parliament to provide for the appointment of a Public Works Member to the Indian Executive Council.[3] In a private letter to Northbrook sometime earlier Salisbury had

---

[1]Mallet to Salisbury, 18 Mar. 1876, Salisbury P., Mallet series.

[2]Indian Govt. to S.S., 28 July 1874, Home Dept. Proc., Public, vol. 517, No. 131, (Jan.).

[3]Telegram, N. to Salisbury, 3 June 1874, N.P., vol. 11.

suggested that such a measure might be advisable, but he did not warn that he was contemplating legislation.[1] Northbrook was annoyed that Salisbury had decided to alter the constitution without consulting his Government and telegraphed asking permission to express an opinion on the measure before it became law.[2] Salisbury's reply that the Bill permitted rather than authorized the appointment of a Public Works Member and that the Government would be consulted before any appointment was made did little to reconcile Northbrook, who thought the appointment would be "useless and possibly inconvenient."[3] He considered that adequate control was maintained over public works under the prevailing system whereby one of the Members of the Council was responsible for that Department in conjunction with the Revenue Department.[4] Salisbury's object was to ensure more careful supervision over public works, but Northbrook feared that the Member, anxious to make a name for himself, would press for more ambitious railway and irrigation projects, thus interfering with his cautious financial policy. He noted, too, that there were political objections to the proposal since "Native and English opinion here ... is immediately aroused by anything in

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 13 Mar. 1874, ibid.
[2]Telegrams, N. to Salisbury, 3 and 8 June 1874, ibid.
[3]N. to Grey, 30 Aug. 1874, ibid., Family collection.
[4]Minute, N., 7 Dec. 1874, Home Dept. Proc., Public, vol. 516, No. 79, (Dec.).

which they think action taken at home increases expenditure."[1] He informed Salisbury that on this ground the measure was being strongly criticized in India.

Much to Northbrook's regret Salisbury refused to delay the Bill in order to give the Indian Government an opportunity to express its views on it. However, during the debates in the House of Lords, in which a number of prominent Liberals questioned the necessity for the new appointment and condemned him for not consulting either the Indian Government or his own Council before introducing the Bill, Salisbury confessed that Northbrook disliked the measure.[2] Partly because of this Northbrook became more conciliatory. He decided that the measure was not sufficiently objectionable to warrant an outright quarrel with Salisbury and telegraphed his friends in the Commons not to force a debate there "from any feelings they may entertain on my account."[3] If such a debate were to take place, he feared the Cabinet might think that he had put his friends up to it. Some Liberal members, however, still considered that the Government was pushing the measure through with undue haste. During the second reading in the Commons, Henry Fawcett introduced an amendment proposing that proceedings on the Bill be delayed until the

---

[1]N. to Salisbury, 30 June 1874, N.P., vol. 11.
[2]Debates, 9 and 15 June 1874, Hansard, vol. 219.
[3]N. to Grenfell, 26 July 1874, N.P., vol. 22.

House received an official record of Northbrook's opinion.[1] Support for this amendment was no doubt reduced by Grant Duff's statement that Northbrook had no strong objections to the Bill and had requested his personal friends not to vote against it simply from misapprehension on this account. The motion to proceed with the second reading was carried by a majority of 171 to 52. The Bill was adopted without further opposition.

Just as the dispute was dying down, Northbrook received a copy of the Act along with a despatch directing the appointment of a Public Works Member.[2] Salisbury had previously indicated that the Act was permissive and that no decision to add the Member to the Council would be made until the Indian Government had been consulted and Northbrook was indignant that his Government was not to be consulted on the merits of the scheme. He warned Salisbury that unless the despatch were altered controversy with the home Government would be inevitable.[3] In a private memorandum he strongly emphasized the importance of the Secretary of State's fully consulting the Governor-General on contemplated legislation or executive measures affecting the Indian Government.[4] Salisbury cancelled

---

[1] Speech, 29 July 1874, Hansard, vol. 221.
[2] S.S. to Indian Govt., 21 Aug. 1874, Judicial and Leg. Despatches to India, vol. 17.
[3] Telegram, N. to Salisbury, 22 Sept. 1874, N.P., vol.11.
[4] N. to Salisbury, 22 Sept. 1874, ibid.

the despatch and thus met Northbrook's immediate objections. But he did not accept his views on consultation. He maintained that he had consulted Northbrook as fully as necessary and that the Indian Government had no right to complain if it were not consulted on measures affecting it.[1] Northbrook disagreed with this view and made sure that his Government's disapproval of Salisbury's action was conveyed to other prominent Conservatives. At his suggestion, Hobhouse wrote to Sir Stafford Northcote, Chancellor of the Exchequer and a former Secretary of State for India, complaining about the "sudden and peremptory modes of doing business that are now in vogue" and warning that if they continued real trouble between the Governments was inevitable.[2] Northbrook expressed similar apprehensions to some of his Liberal friends, but hoped to avoid conflict by remaining "very quiet and deliberate."[3]

The controversy over the Councils Act helped to bring into focus a fundamental difference between Northbrook and Salisbury over the constitutional position and function of their respective Councils. Shortly after taking office Salisbury informed Northbrook that he regarded Councils as consultative rather than decision-making bodies.[4]

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 30 Sept. and 22 Oct. 1874, ibid.
[2]Hobhouse to N., 27 Sept. 1874, ibid., vol. 16.
[3]N. to Grey, 16 June 1874, ibid., Family collection.
[4]Salisbury to N., 12 June 1874, ibid., vol. 11.

He did not consider himself obliged to consult his own Council and had not sought their opinion on the India Councils Act. At the same time he warned Northbrook against giving his Executive Council "too independent an existence. The danger," he continued, " is this:"

> They are a closely knit body, at the head of compact powerful services, strong by knowledge, influence, and connection, disposing evidently ... of a large amount of Press support. ... I am afraid of your Council, if ever it should happen to have a weak Governor General at its head, finding out its power of moving the machine at home, by manipulating the organs of opinion in India; and it will do so all the sooner if it is encouraged to have a high idea of its own corporate individuality and independence. The danger of such a practice would be very great, for it would in the end mean appealing to native opinion in India against the English Government, and then we should have before long an Independence cry fostered by White leaders.[1]

To avoid this danger Salisbury declared that he was anxious to exalt the power of the Governor-General, who was "usually an English Statesman with his past and future in England."[2] Northbrook was distressed by these views which were completely at variance with his own. He did not consider that his Council had too much power or that it constituted any threat to continued imperial control. "Except under certain circumstances," Northbrook wrote, "the Governor General and the Council have no separate legal existence, and they together constitute the Government of India."[3] He regarded the position of the Executive Council

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 30 July 1874, ibid. [2]Ibid.
[3]N. to Salisbury, 20 Aug. 1874, ibid.

in India as similar in many respects to that of the Cabinet in Britain. In practice he consulted his Council on all important questions. Although he had the legal power to overrule them, he was never obliged to use it because the majority supported him on every important issue. He was convinced that in the difficult task of governing India an Executive Council composed of experienced and competent men had a vital part to play and he did not want his own power increased at their expense. He feared that if the administration were conducted as Salisbury desired collision between the two Governments would be inevitable and that the general standard of government would decline. "It would in my opinion be a dangerous thing," he wrote to his uncle, "if India comes to be governed by a Secretary of State at home acting on his own views without consulting his Council in private communication with a Governor General here doing the same."[1] Although Salisbury later informed Northbrook that he was not contemplating any practical change in the relative positions of the Governor-General and the Executive, Northbrook probably remained apprehensive over the wide variance in their views on this important constitutional question.

The strong criticism directed against Salisbury for

---

[1]N. to Grey, 20 Sept. 1874, ibid., Family collection.

his handling of the India Councils Act may have shown him the inadvisability of making major decisions entirely on his own initiative. It did not, however, weaken his determination to maintain a firm control over the Indian administration and the way in which the home Government exercised its authority on the Baroda issue produced serious difficulties. As already noted, the Indian Government concluded that the Gaikwar was guilty of attempting to poison the Resident and had recommended his deposition on that ground, but instead the Cabinet ordered that he be deposed because of his misgovernment.[1] This decision left the Indian Government open to charges of inconsistency and of breaking its former pledge to the Gaikwar and resulted in increased agitation against its Baroda policy. Northbrook was particularly displeased because the Cabinet, acting on the basis of a few official telegrams and newspaper reports, had overruled the unanimous and earnest recommendation of his Government. "Salisbury ... ought to know better," he wrote, "than to interfere with us, especially with such imperfect information as he must then have had."[2] Although Salisbury's final despatch on the Baroda issue was conciliatory, Northbrook never became reconciled to the Cabinet's behaviour. In a letter to

---

[1]See above, pp. 243-46.
[2]N. to Camperdown, 14 June 1875, N.P., vol. 23.

Clerk only a week before his resignation, Northbrook stated that he thought "what did most harm was the Home Government not having supported us as to the guilt of Mulhar Rao."[1] Northbrook firmly believed that it was essential on grounds of imperial security for the Secretary of State to uphold the authority of the Indian Government in its dealings with the princes, but had found that he could not rely upon Salisbury to do this. The effect was to reduce his confidence in Salisbury.

The Baroda issue brought to the fore a difference in attitude between Northbrook and Salisbury over the press in India. During his first year in office Northbrook had been strongly urged by Campbell to check the "unbridled license" allowed to the vernacular press by tightening the laws of sedition.[2] However, the Government already had the power to deal with any deliberate attempt to instigate disaffection and, since Northbrook believed that "a prosecution against the press" would be "unwise" except in cases of this nature, he declined to alter the law.[3] On the contrary, he emphasized the value of a free press in India.

> ... I ... think ... criticisms are, on the whole, an advantage. We are very ignorant of the feelings of the people; we have no representative institutions to give us the advantages of hostile criticism of our measures before they are put into ... law, and the

---

[1]N. to Clerk, 6 Sept. 1875, ibid.
[2]Campbell to N., July 1872, ibid., vol. 13.
[3]N. to Campbell, 20 July 1872, ibid.

> press may to a certain extent supplement the deficiency. ... It is far more safe that these things should be said openly than ... without the knowledge of Government.[1]

Salisbury, however, did not share these views but considered that in India or any country under "despotic" rule newspapers were "an unmixed nuisance".[2] He was extremely concerned over the attitude of the vernacular press on the Baroda crisis. "We are a little puzzled here," he wrote to Northbrook following the Gaikwar's arrest, " at the impunity you extend to Native Editors who write up poisoning."[3] Shortly afterwards he raised the question officially. He drew the attention of the Government to certain specific articles, notably to one in the Amrita Bazar Patrika, expressing surprise that so few princes had tried to get rid of Residents by poisoning them.[4] Salisbury warned that the "unchecked dissemination amongst the Natives" of articles such as this could not "be allowed without danger to individuals and to the interests of Government itself." He was convinced that the editor had infringed the law of sedition and asked the Government to decide whether it was advisable to prosecute him. He also directed the Government to give its "serious attention to

---

[1] Ibid.
[2] Salisbury to N., 21 May 1875, ibid., vol. 12.
[3] Salisbury to N., 5 Mar. 1875, ibid.
[4] S.S. to Indian Govt., 6 May 1875, Pol. and Sec. Despatches to India, vol. 1; also see above, p. 239.

the continued publication of this class of articles by a portion of the Native Press." In a private letter to Northbrook, Salisbury expressed his support for control over the press. "I have a strong impression," he wrote, "that you will have to increase your preventive power over them."[1]

Northbrook was also concerned over the attitude of some newspapers, but, as we have seen, he laid most blame on the British and Anglo-Indian newspapers and thought that it was unfair to single out the vernacular press for punishment.[2] Instead of prosecution Northbrook relied upon more subtle methods of curbing seditious writing. In the first place, he depended upon local officers to quietly use their influence "to prevent foolish writing in the Native papers."[3] Another means was, in the words of his private secretary, that of encouraging "the respectable portion of the native press [to] act as an antidote to the somewhat disreputable portion."[4] The Hindoo Patriot, at that time the most influential newspaper in Bengal, belonged to the former category and during the Baroda crisis Evelyn Baring informed its editor, Kristo Das Pal, of the Government's concern over the tone of some of the

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 21 May 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2]See above, pp. 241-42.
[3]N. to Salisbury, 1 Apr. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[4]Baring to Buckland, 29 June 1875, Temple P. vol. 11.

vernacular newspapers.[1] Pal considered that a free press had a responsibility to confine itself within the bounds of legitimate criticism and to avoid seditious language. He used his influence on behalf of more moderate writing though he also pointed out that the vernacular newspapers were often influenced by the bitter attacks on the Government which frequently appeared in the Anglo-Indian press.[2] Where these means proved ineffective and seditious articles were actually printed, Northbrook had the editors of the papers concerned warned demi-officially of the Government's strong objections.[3] This course was used in the case of the most objectionable articles written on Baroda and proved reasonably effective.

The more important question of whether the Government should take measures to stop seditious writing altogether by imposing greater control over the press was, in Northbrook's opinion, "very difficult ... to determine."[4] He admitted that the Government had little power to deal with publications which it considered "dangerous to the public interest", but which were not punishable under existing law because of the impossibility of proving a deliberate

---

[1]Ibid.

[2]Editorial, 1 Feb. 1875; and Pal to Baring, 25 May 1875, N.P., Family collection.

[3]Baring to Buckland, 8 Sept. 1875, Temple P., vol. 214; and N. to Strachey, 10 Nov. 1875, N.P., vol. 17.

[4]N. to Salisbury, 7 June 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

intention to promote disaffection. Nevertheless, Northbrook still thought that press control would be inadvisable. In a letter to his uncle he wrote:

> A free press in India does undoubtedly some harm, but it is also a kind of safety valve, and the Indian Press is improving. Some of the best papers are very fair and moderate, others sin only from ignorance.[1]

He did not express his views as candidly to Salisbury but informed him that he was not convinced of the advisability of tightening up the press laws and that for the time being he was absolutely opposed to it. "I think," he wrote, "it would be exceedingly unwise to take any step in that direction just now, as it would be at once attributed to irritation at the comments about Baroda."[2]

Salisbury found the argument against immediate change convincing but warned Northbrook that "a law against seditious newspapers" would have to be passed "before long".[3] Although Northbrook received no further orders on this subject prior to his resignation, he must surely

---

[1] N. to Grey, 12 July 1875, ibid., Family collection.
[2] N. to Salisbury, 7 June 1875, loc. cit.
[3] Salisbury to N., 8 July 1875, ibid.

have been apprehensive on this score.[1] Nor were his apprehensions unjustified for a Vernacular Press Act was one of the first measures to be introduced by his Conservative successor.

More serious still was the dispute between Northbrook and Salisbury over Indian foreign policy, particularly with regard to Afghanistan. As we have seen, they differed over the degree of danger posed to India by Russia's advance

---

[1]On another issue connected with the press -- that of the extent to which government officials should be allowed to edit or own newspapers or to write for the press -- Northbrook and Salisbury were in agreement. Salisbury considered the habit of many officials of attacking the Government's policies in the press was a great "evil" and that it might "involve much danger" and advised Northbrook to take measures to check it. [Salisbury to N., 5 Mar. 1875, N.P., vol. 12.] Northbrook agreed to this largely no doubt because of difficulties with Robert Knight, an assistant secretary to the Bengal Government. In 1873 when he accepted this post Knight, who was a prominent journalist, was allowed to continue to edit and publish his paper, the Indian Economist, on condition that it would be "confined to statistical and economic subjects, and ... avoid controversial subjects." [Campbell to N., 13 Aug. 1873, N.P., vol. 14.] When Knight violated these stipulations and, despite strong warnings, attacked the Government first on the famine and then on Baroda, Northbrook had him dismissed from his position. Northbrook was also critical of the journalistic activities of two other prominent officials, W.W. Hunter and Lepel Griffin. In July 1875 the Indian Government issued a resolution stipulating that no official was to become the proprietor or editor of a newspaper without the express sanction of the Government. Sanction would be given only if the topics to be discussed were "not of a political character". Officials were allowed to continue to contribute to the public press provided they did not reveal confidential information and confined themselves "within the limits of temperate and reasonable discussion." [Resolution, 8 July 1875, Home Dept. Proc., Public, No. 10, (Aug.).] Although these regulations were reasonable enough they were undoubtedly resented by officials concerned and by the Anglo-Indian press which relied heavily on writings of officials.

in Central Asia and more especially over the measures to be taken in consequence. This question was one on which there was a clear-cut difference of opinion between the Liberals and Conservatives, and, partly as a result, Northbrook and Salisbury held particularly strong views on the subject. By mid-1875 Salisbury had instructed the Indian Government to establish a British Resident in Afghanistan, while Northbrook had emphatically protested against this policy both officially and privately. However, Northbrook's protests had little effect on Salisbury. In late July he informed Northbrook that he was more convinced than ever of the need for a British Resident in Afghanistan.[1] Up to the time Northbrook submitted his resignation, the Indian Government had not received a reply to its letter of June 1875 disagreeing with Salisbury's Afghan policy. Yet Northbrook was gravely apprehensive that he would shortly be forced to carry out a forward policy in Afghanistan[2] -- a policy which he believed would soon result in an unnecessary and expensive war against that country.

Of even greater concern to Northbrook at the time of his resignation were the differences which had recently arisen with Salisbury over the tariff reforms. This

---

[1]Salisbury to N., 30 July 1875, N.P., vol. 12.
[2]N. to Mallet, 23 Aug. 1875, ibid., vol. 23; and N. to Salisbury, 30 Sept. 1875, ibid., vol. 12.

controversy has been fully discussed in a previous chapter and here it is only necessary to emphasize the extremely disturbing effect which Salisbury's hostile reaction produced upon Northbrook. Salisbury's expression of surprise that a measure of such vital importance to England had not been forwarded to him beforehand under the provisions of the 1874 legislative despatch and his demand for an official explanation of why this had not been done undoubtedly renewed Northbrook's earlier apprehensions over these legislative instructions. He must have realized at once that his interpretation of them had been too liberal and that they were really intended to limit the Indian Government's freedom to legislate on its own initiative. In view of his strong objections to increased interference by the Secretary of State, this realization must have been extremely disturbing to Northbrook.

His greatest immediate anxiety, however, was that Salisbury would carry out his threat to disallow the Act and force him to abolish the cotton duties. "I never was more disappointed," he wrote to Mallet on 6 September, "than to hear from Lord Salisbury that he contemplates disallowing the Act."[1] As we have seen, Northbrook was sure that a reversal of his Government's tariff policy would have grave political and financial repercussions.

---

[1]N. to Mallet, 6 Sept. 1875, ibid., vol. 23.

Although Salisbury had not stated that new taxes would be necessary, Northbrook was convinced that they would be unavoidable if the cotton duties were reduced. However, he was not prepared to do this and informed Mallet that if new taxes were required the home Government would "have to find a fresh Governor General for the purpose, as I think it would be quite unjustifiable under the circumstances, and indeed I am too far pledged in this matter to carry out a different policy."[1] By mid-September Northbrook still did not know whether Salisbury would fulfil his threat to disallow the Act or order the Government to go ahead with the reduction of the duty as instructed in his July despatch, but he was certainly apprehensive. "Between you and me," he wrote to Mallet a little later, "I was afraid Lord Salisbury would take some hasty step about the Tariff Act."[2]

What distressed Northbrook as much as any of the specific disputes was that, taken as a whole, they revealed that Salisbury was assuming an unprecedented and steadily increasing control over every aspect of Indian administration. To Northbrook, who considered that his duty was to rule and not merely to act as an instrument of the Secretary of State, this trend was extremely alarming. He

---

[1]N. to Mallet, 23 Aug. 1875, ibid.
[2]N. to Mallet, 7 Oct. 1875, ibid.

believed that Salisbury's policy would destroy the initiative of the Indian Government, undermine its authority, and be detrimental to the good administration of the country. He was sure that the Secretary of State could never have as complete a knowledge of Indian conditions as the Governor-General in Council and that, because of this ignorance, he would make serious blunders. To govern India in this way would also necessitate extensive use of the telegraph and Northbrook knew from experience that the brevity demanded by this form of communication often produced misunderstanding between the two Governments. Finally, Northbrook feared that with the assumption of greater control by the home Government there would be a growing tendency, as in the case of the cotton duties, to sacrifice India's interests for those of Britain.

It is clear from this analysis that differences occurred between Northbrook and Salisbury from the beginning of their official relationship, that these differences became progressively more serious, and that they caused Northbrook increasing anxiety. By September 1875 he realized that his own views on many major questions of Indian administration were irreconcilable with those of Salisbury. Most of all, he was apprehensive that Salisbury might force upon him a tariff policy and a foreign policy in which he could not concur. Despite Northbrook's claim that he was resigning for private reasons, it is hardly

conceivable that these differences with Salisbury had no influence on his decision. Indeed there is much to suggest that they were the principal reason.

Some of Northbrook's closest friends, all of whom would have known if his son had been causing serious trouble, attributed the resignation solely to the differences with Salisbury. Hobhouse, his closest friend in the Executive Council, wrote to Northbrook upon hearing of his resignation:

> I cannot properly express ... the sorrow with which I have read the announcement ... about your resignation. ... If possible, I regret it even more on public grounds than on private, for I take it to mean nothing else than that you have been worried and bullied out of office by Lord Salisbury. That his system would either lead to a sharp collision or reduce the Government of India to a nonentity is what I ventured to prophesy as long ago as May 1874. My only hope was that by patient endurance on this side, and steady remonstrance against wrong, evil consequences might be avoided till some change came and the tyranny was overpast. That, however, is not to be, and now I take it a new Governor will come out on the terms of being Lord Salisbury's clerk to effect publicly whatever plan he forms in secret. ... It is a sad end to such honest, upright, and able work as you have done. I only hope now that you will in due time let the whole truth be known.[1]

A similar view was expressed by Henry Grenfell, one of Northbrook's personal friends in London. Grenfell urged Northbrook that, in justice to himself, he should not allow it to be supposed that he had resigned for private reasons. "I think," he wrote, "you ought to allow your friends to insinuate that ... the strong, wilful, and impulsive man,

---

[1]Hobhouse to N., 5 Jan. 1876, ibid., vol. 18.

who is quite accidentally in the chair in London, made it impossible for you who had your own views on all matters in India (views grounded on far longer experience both in general and specific affairs than his) to serve with credit to yourself under him."[1] Perry, Northbrook's closest friend on the India Council, also attributed the resignation to disagreement with Salisbury. He thought Northbrook's early retirement would be a great loss to India but admitted that he had shown great foresight in retiring when he did. "I congratulate you personally," he wrote to Northbrook,"as you retire spontaneously, full of honor ... Your determination to retire so long ago as September will altogether prevent that collision which I anticipated was coming respecting important questions of policy."[2] Even Disraeli seemed unconvinced that Northbrook was resigning for private reasons, despite the claims in his letter of resignation and Salisbury's opinion that the reasons given were genuine. "Under no circumstances," he wrote, "will [the private motives alleged by Northbrook] ever be credited."[3]

Further evidence that Northbrook did not resign on private grounds was given by James Wilson, editor of the Indian Daily News at the time of the resignation. Wilson

---

[1]Grenfell to N., 31 Mar. 1876, ibid., vol. 7.
[2]Perry to N., 7 Jan. 1876, ibid., vol. 23.
[3]Disraeli to Salisbury, 15 Oct. 1875, Salisbury P., Beaconsfield collection.

later claimed that because of the many conflicting accounts circulated at the time, he had gone to Government House to ascertain the actual reasons for the resignation, and had been told that the causes "were not personal, but public, though, for the present, they could not be disclosed."[1] Wilson, who published this information in 1879 after the conflict which had occurred between Northbrook and Salisbury on the Afghan policy had become public knowledge, concluded that this disagreement was the real cause of Northbrook's resignation.

One can only speculate on why, if Northbrook resigned chiefly because of difficulties with Salisbury, he himself never admitted it. Perhaps it was to avert the undesirable consequences which would have followed from such an admission. Had he done so his Liberal friends in Parliament would certainly have defended him at the expense of Salisbury and the Conservatives. The resignation would have become a party issue and it would have been practically impossible to exclude personalities. To Northbrook this would have been extremely disagreeable. Partly because of his reserved temperament he intensely disliked any Parliamentary debate which centred around personalities. He was even more anxious to keep important questions of Indian policy outside the realm of British party politics.

---

[1]Quoted in Hindoo Patriot, 3 Feb. 1879.

If Indian questions became a source of outright party conflict, he feared that the security of British rule would be weakened. It was partly for this reason that he never informed members of his own party of disagreements with Salisbury until these became public knowledge. Even then he generally minimized his difficulties and never attempted to exploit them for party purposes. Furthermore, an admission by Northbrook that he had resigned largely on public grounds might have had serious repercussions in India, where there was growing criticism on the part of the educated classes over much of Salisbury's policy. Under these circumstances, the press in India would undoubtedly have strongly supported Northbrook and severely attacked Salisbury and the British Government. Such a controversy could hardly have been in the best interest of imperial control and for that reason Northbrook would certainly have wished to avoid it.

How much these considerations actually weighed with Northbrook at the time he wrote his letter of resignation it is impossible to determine. There can be little doubt, however, that he hoped his resignation would prevent further deterioration in relations between the two Governments. But, as we have seen, these hopes were soon crushed for in November Salisbury laid down stringent regulations to control legislation in India and emphatically ordered the Government to reduce the cotton duties and to establish

an Agent in Afghanistan.[1] Under these circumstances Northbrook was glad to be terminating his official connection with Salisbury. "I am afraid," he wrote, "I could not have remained here to carry out the instructions we have received as they now stand."[2] At the same time, he thought that his retirement would be "a good thing in the interests of the public service",[3] for he hoped that the strong protests made against Salisbury's policies not only by the Indian Government but by the press in India and Britain and by Liberal peers in Parliament would have an effect. He realized that a change of Viceroys would enable the Conservatives to modify their policies without loss of face.

The Conservative leaders, too, were pleased by Northbrook's early retirement but for different reasons. Although there is no evidence that they deliberately attempted to force him out of office, his resignation came as no surprise to them. Salisbury and Disraeli were well aware of Northbrook's dissatisfaction with much of their Indian policy, and as early as June 1875 the latter confessed that he expected Northbrook would soon leave India.[4] Despite their expressions of regret when the news of his desire

---

[1] See above, pp. 301-04 and 381-82.
[2] N. to Salisbury, 7 Jan. 1876, N.P., vol. 12.
[3] N. to Argyll, 14 Apr. 1876, ibid., vol. 7.
[4] Disraeli to Salisbury, 8 June 1875, Salisbury P., Beaconsfield collection.

to resign reached them, neither was genuinely sorry. It was true that Salisbury strongly advocated giving Northbrook an earldom. However, he did so not so much because he approved of Northbrook's administration but chiefly upon the grounds of precedent, the importance "in the interests of the Empire, rather to lean in favour of a political opponent," and to dispel the rumour widely circulated in India that Disraeli was "resolved to drive N. out of office" in order to substitute one of his friends.[1] Disraeli eventually granted the earldom though he did not think that Northbrook deserved it. The mild sense of satisfaction with which Salisbury and Disraeli first learned of Northbrook's wish to resign changed to one of great relief as the fundamental nature of Northbrook's objections to their Indian policy became more obvious during the final months of his administration. "Considering the present state of affairs," Disraeli wrote early in 1876, "I am glad we have been able to terminate our connection with him; and in so gentlemanlike a manner."[2] To another friend he blusteringly referred to the event not as Northbrook's resignation, but as "Northbrook's recall".[3] They

---

[1]Salisbury to Disraeli, 10 Oct. 1875, Disraeli P., B/XX/Ce/59.

[2]Disraeli to Salisbury, 11 Jan. 1876, Salisbury P., Beaconsfield collection.

[3]Disraeli to Lady Bradford, 29 Dec. 1875, Marquis of Zetland, (ed.), The Letters of Disraeli to Lady Bradford and Lady Chesterfield, vol. I, p. 313.

were pleased, however, not because they felt obliged to change their Indian policy and wished to take advantage of the change of Viceroys to do this without loss of face. On the contrary, they looked forward to implementing their policy and sent Lytton to India with instructions to establish a British Agent in Afghanistan and to reduce the cotton duties as soon as possible.

At the time of his departure from India in April 1876 Northbrook was unaware of this. Instead, he assumed that the modifications which Salisbury announced in the legislative instructions and in the tariff policy around that time implied a general desire to retreat from the rather extreme position he had earlier adopted. Northbrook had no desire to prolong the controversy and therefore, as we have noted, announced in Parliament in August that he no longer disagreed with Salisbury on these issues.[1] He soon realized, however, that Salisbury had not fundamentally altered his views and became more and more disturbed over Conservative policy towards India as it unfolded during Lytton's administration. As we have already seen, he severely attacked the Government over the remission of the cotton duties and was one of the most forceful opponents in Britain of its Afghan policy. He was less critical of the Vernacular Press Act, but despite Lytton's efforts to gain his support for it Northbrook informed him that he

---

[1]See above, p. 323.

was "still unconvinced that it would not have been better to have borne with the evil than to have given so great a shock to the public confidence in India."[1] Furthermore, he was disturbed to find from the Parliamentary debates on Indian affairs during the latter part of the 1870's and from the publication of official papers, that the trend towards personal Government, with the Secretary of State and the Viceroy making major decisions without consulting their Councils, had increased. Although the actual letter of the laws relating to India might not have been violated, Northbrook was convinced that the "tendency ... to make the Government of India an arbitrary and personal Government" was "unconstitutional in the broadest sense of the term."[2] Under these circumstances, Northbrook considered that the Liberal opposition was well justified in attacking the Government's handling of Indian affairs, and more especially because he believed that the Conservatives had embarked upon an imperial policy partly to boost their electoral strength. "If I were to say what I really think," he confessed to a friend in 1880, "I could hardly find words to express my sorrow at the results of the last few years of Indian administration."[3] Consequently, the overwhelming defeat of the Conservatives in the general

---

[1] N. to Lytton, 24 May 1878, N.P., vol. 19.
[2] N. to Argyll, 27 Apr. 1879, ibid., vol. 7.
[3] N. to Eden, 18 June 1880, ibid., vol. 19.

election of 1880 was a matter of great rejoicing to Northbrook for he saw in the Liberal victory the end of the forward policy in India and the return to a system of government that was in closer accord not only with the spirit of the constitution but with the aspirations of the educated classes.

It is obvious from this analysis that most of the issues which had arisen between Northbrook and Salisbury prior to September 1875 -- the constitutional relationship between the Viceroy and his Council and between them and the Secretary of State, the freedom of the press, financial policy, and foreign affairs -- were of major and long term importance. Underlying them, too, was a fundamental difference between Northbrook and Salisbury in political philosophy and in attitudes towards India. Whereas Northbrook had much sympathy with Indian aspirations and was anxious to rule as far as possible in accordance with the views of the educated classes, Salisbury's attitude was more hostile and he looked at most questions from a strictly British rather than from an Indian point of view. Difficulties were also accentuated by their contrasting personalities and the fact that they were both extremely strong-willed, reluctant to compromise on questions of principle. There can be little doubt that disagreement with Salisbury largely accounted for Northbrook's resignation. Probably his son's behaviour also influenced his decision, but had he been

receiving co-operation from Salisbury instead of increasing opposition to the main lines of his Indian policy he would undoubtedly have remained in India for the normal five year term.

CONCLUSION

Northbrook's retirement in April 1876 marked the end of a momentous Viceroyalty. Yet, public opinion, especially in India, was sharply divided in its reaction to his resignation and in its verdict on his administration. Among the leading Anglo-Indian newspapers, the Times of India was virtually alone in regretting his departure. It agreed not only with most of his policies but with the general spirit of his administration and maintained that under him India was ruled "with great honesty of purpose and with an unmistakable desire to advance the welfare of the population at large."[1] However, the European community as a whole had little praise for Northbrook. "His own countrymen in India generally," the Pioneer frankly admitted, "feel no enthusiasm about him."[2] It was true that they acknowledged that he had made a notable achievement in overcoming the discontent which had prevailed at the outset of his term and largely approved his financial policy, but many of them considered that he had been recklessly extravagant on the famine, too lenient towards Baroda, too conciliatory in foreign affairs, and too attentive to the views of the Indian educated classes. The Bombay Gazette and the Englishman were particularly

---

[1]Editorial, 6 Jan. 1876
[2]Editorial, 17 Apr. 1876.

disparaging in their comments on his general administration. Upon hearing of his impending retirement the former newspaper declared that "none of his predecessors left India so utterly unregretted as he will be."[1] The Englishman maintained that he was the "least popular" of Governors-General and that he had "committed more serious blunders than any of his predecessors."[2]

One of the main grounds of Anglo-Indian criticism was that Northbrook, unlike his two immediate predecessors, showed much scepticism of the views of many top civil servants and instead of being dominated by his Council tended to dominate it and to shape the course of policy on most major issues. The Englishman alleged that Northbrook had "an overweening confidence in his own judgement, which deprived him ... of the counsels of those who might have beneficially advised him."[3] The Pioneer maintained that it had been the day of "safe men", of men who were "safe to do little or nothing."[4] The Bombay Gazette was even more extreme in its comments, alleging that Northbrook had "meddled in every Department of State" and "done mischief in all" and that the Government was largely run by him and his private secretary, Evelyn Baring.[5] "The legitimate influence of Members of Council, Secretaries,

---

[1]Editorial, 6 Jan. 1876.
[2]Editorial, 18 Apr. 1876.
[3]Ibid.
[4]Editorial, 1 Apr. 1876.
[5]Editorial, 6 Jan. 1876.

Heads of Departments, and public opinion," it wrote, "counts for nothing ...; the Private Secretary, through whom alone the Grand Lama of India holds communication with the outside world, is everything."[1] While Evelyn Baring, later Lord Cromer, was an extremely competent private secretary whose assistance proved invaluable, there is no evidence that Northbrook placed undue reliance on him. Nor was it fair to accuse Northbrook of an autocratic disregard for the opinions of his Councillors or of the provincial administrators. In fact, he rarely decided upon important issues without full consultation with his colleagues. However, Northbrook certainly showed an independence of judgement which many leading officials disliked and insisted upon governing according to Indian public opinion to an extent which few of them approved. He was therefore never the idol of the civil service as his predecessor had been and the Friend of India was correct in asserting that if those who served under Northbrook "were to write a history of his administration it would not resemble the 'Life of Mayo'."[2] In fact, the unsympathetic attitude of many leading civil servants, whose writings formed the main published record of the period, largely accounts for the fact that Northbrook's achievements have not been held in higher repute.

---

[1]Ibid. [2]Editorial, 29 Jan. 1876.

The disparaging tone of the Anglo-Indian newspapers was reflected to some extent by the press in Britain, though on the whole it was far less hostile. The Spectator considered that he had been a "good average Viceroy, rather unluckily situated" in view of the growing interference from London made possible by telegraphic communications.[1] The Daily News maintained that he had filled "his difficult position with ability and success" and that in handling the famine he had demonstrated "the capacity to deal with an entirely new and unexpected emergency."[2] But the Times was less approving and compared Northbrook unfavourably with his recent predecessors. It claimed that he had shown less "genius and originality" than Dalhousie, less "moral nobleness" than Canning, and less "genial and robust vigour" than Mayo.[3] However, it admitted that unlike some of them Northbrook had been "head" of the Government "in fact as well as in form", praised his tireless devotion to duty, and acknowledged that his "cool-headed sagacity ... was not often at fault."[4] It agreed that he had "won his Earldom fairly".

In contrast to the rather unenthusiastic attitude of the British press and the strong hostility of the Anglo-Indian newspapers, the Indian educated classes had much

---

[1]Editorial, 8 Jan. 1876.
[2]Editorial, 5 Jan. 1876.
[3]Editorial, 5 Jan. 1876.
[4]Ibid.; and Editorial, 20 July, 1876.

praise for Northbrook. Although most vernacular newspapers considered his Baroda policy as a great blot on his career, they approved much of his general administration and regretted his premature retirement. The Delhi weekly, Sadadarsha, for example, maintained that his departure was "a misfortune for the people of India."[1] The Hindu Hitoshini, a Decca weekly, claimed that "India had found in His Lordship a good and firm ruler, at a time when such a Governor was needed at the helm of the State."[2] The Suhrid, another Bengali publication, while critical of Northbrook's Baroda "blunders", acknowledged that his "wise and considerate" policies had removed the discontent which "had filled the country" during Mayo's term.[3] The Hindu Ranjika, a Rajshahi weekly, considered that Northbrook's policies had been "prompted by sincerity, a sense of duty, and good will to the natives of India,"[4] -- a view largely shared by the Bharat Mihir which maintained that the "chief glory of his administration" was that he had not "sacrificed India for the gratification of England."[5] One of the highest tributes came from the Sahachar, a Calcutta weekly, which declared that he "enjoyed the confidence of the public to a degree which few of his

---

[1]Editorial, 10 Jan. 1876, North-Western Provinces Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 30 Jan. 1876.
[2]Editorial, 15 Jan. 1876, Bengal Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 22 Jan. 1876.
[3]Editorial, 1 Feb. 1876, ibid., 12 Feb. 1876.
[4]Editorial, 26 Jan. 1876, ibid., 5 Feb. 1876.
[5]Editorial, 5 Apr. 1876, ibid., 15 Apr. 1876.

predecessors since the days of Lord Canning had ever done."[1]

These sentiments were completely endorsed by the two most influential Indian newspapers, the Hindoo Patriot and the Bengalee. Although both newspapers had reservations about some aspects of his Baroda policy, they expressed the highest praise for the other leading features of his administration. The Bengalee noted that when Northbrook had taken office "India was seething with discontent" but that "by the wisdom of his measures" he had "soon succeeded in allaying this widespread disaffection and in restoring the confidence of the people in the Government."[2] On another occasion it wrote:

> As the ... Viceroy's departure ... is drawing near, people are realizing the extent of their serious loss. They lose in His Excellency a sincere well-wisher and friend, whose object in coming to India was no sordid love of money or power or place. ...
>
> If no glories of a conquering hero awaits the great statesman who is about to bid adieu to India, his real claim to the gratitude of native India rests on far higher consideration. He had averted great misfortunes, financial, political and moral, and his name is enshrined in many a heart throughout this vast empire.[3]

The Hindoo Patriot was equally emphatic in its approval. It was particularly pleased by the sympathy which he had shown for the educated classes and the people generally and the way in which he had mixed socially with leading Indians.

> In this country the Viceroy as the head of society is a most potent agent for doing good. It is he who

---

[1]Editorial, 10 Jan. 1876, ibid., 15 Jan. 1876.
[2]Editorial, 8 Jan. 1876.
[3]Editorial, 18 Mar. 1876.

> moulds the social feeling -- who guides the instincts and impulses of society. And no Governor General since ... Bentinck ... shewed a more generous desire to mix with the natives and to raise them to the level of European Society. Even Canning the Just, the idol of the people, was not so condescending or gracious. ... Lord Northbrook felt that the ruler was also a man and a brother, and though naturally of a somewhat reserved temperament he knew how to mix with the people without compromising his dignity. ... There is no pride in him, no duplicity, no humbugging. As he thinks so he acts. He kindly feelings towards the people ... had a most healthy influence upon the governing class. Even the most aristocratic and stiff-necked civilian does not now consider it infra dig to speak to a native or to treat him as a fellow-man.[1]

The Patriot expressed annoyance that some Anglo-Indian newspapers, "in their antipathy against Lord Northbrook", were "making a hero of Lord Mayo", and emphasized that from the Indian point of view Northbrook's achievements shone with "the greater lustre" because of his restraint in legislation, his reduction of taxation, his curbing of expenditure, his refusal to sacrifice higher education to primary education, and his unmistakable sympathy for the people.[2] It admitted that Mayo's "genial hospitality" had been "a passport to his personal popularity with a certain class of his countrymen" but pointed out that educated Indians with whom he was "markedly stiff" and who "did not eat or drink at the same table formed their estimate of him from a different stand-point of views."[3] The Patriot, with a keen touch of satire, stated that Northbrook could not be

---

[1]Editorial, 10 Jan. 1876.
[2]Editorial, 8 May 1876.
[3]Ibid.

considered "a brilliant ruler" since he had "made no war, annexed no territory, broke no pledge, committed no plunder, and resorted to no sensational trick."[1] But in its opinion, he had shown outstanding statesmanship by avoiding such measures and by ruling instead according to the spirit of the 1858 Proclamation.

> What Lord Northbrook promised at the outset he had fulfilled ... He had said that 'England desired no territorial aggrandizement', -- and he has not added one acre to the area of the Indian empire -- that 'equal justice shall be dealt to all', and he has never been seen to go astray wilfully or knowingly from the path of ... even-handed justice -- ... that 'the feelings and interests of all classes and creeds shall be duly considered', and his whole administration has been a testimony of this.[2]

The views expressed by the Bengalee and the Hindoo Patriot were largely shared by Indian leaders in Calcutta and on their initiative a public meeting was held in the town hall in April 1876 to pay tribute to Northbrook. The meeting was attended by about one thousand people, the large majority of whom were Indians.[3] The first of the principal speakers was Romanath Tagore who spoke with much feeling of Northbrook's personal friendliness towards Indians as well as his achievements in government and moved the adoption of a resolution strongly praising the main features of his administration.[4] This resolution was

---

[1]Editorial, 13 Mar. 1876. [2]Ibid.
[3]Editorial, Pioneer, 17 Apr. 1876.
[4]Report of Public Meeting, 8 Apr. 1876, Indian Daily News, 10 Apr. 1876.

seconded by the Chief Justice, Sir Richard Garth, while the Maharaja of Vizianagram and Narenda Krishna Deb spoke in favour of it. However, a number of Bengalis present did not share this enthusiasm for Northbrook and their spokesman, Manonath Mullick, a young barrister, proposed an amendment.[1] Among the group was Babu Chandra Mukerji, the editor of Mookerjee's Magazine which had been so blatantly seditious in its comments on the Baroda crisis, and it was therefore probable that the amendment was intended to censure Northbrook for deposing the Gaikwar. Although many of those present objected even to permitting Mullick to speak, the chairman decided to take a vote on whether he should be allowed to move his amendment. But the meeting voted overwhelmingly against this and the small group of ten who wished to introduce the amendment left the hall amid hisses. This incident did little to impair the spirit of the meeting which enthusiastically adopted the original resolution. The other main resolutions, proposing that a statue of Northbrook be erected in Calcutta and that he should be presented with a farewell address, were moved by Rajendralal Mitra, a distinguished scholar, and Digambar Mitra. Other prominent Indians, among them Jotindra Mohan Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen, leader of the Brahma Samaj, also spoke in praise of Northbrook's achievements, while

---

[1]Ibid.; and Editorial, Hindoo Patriot, 10 Apr. 1876.

the principal European speaker was J.F.D. Inglis, who had been a leading opponent of the income-tax and was at that time a member of the Indian Legislative Council. The farewell address, apparently drawn up by Kristo Das Pal,[1] editor of the Hindoo Patriot, singled out for particular praise Northbrook's financial, tariff, famine, and foreign policies, and, while it acknowledged that there were differences of opinion over the Baroda issue, expressed complete satisfaction with the final settlement. It concluded with this tribute:

> ... It is the general spirit of Your Lordship's administration which calls forth the highest praise -- a spirit quite in unison with the benign sentiments ... contained in [the] memorable Royal Proclamation -- a spirit enlightened, liberal and sympathizing, looking with an equal eye upon all classes ..., without distinction of race, colour or creed, and tempering justice with moderation and mercy.[2]

The address was unanimously approved by the meeting and later presented to Northbrook by a representative group of nearly thirty Indians and over a dozen Europeans.

Northbrook was deeply moved by the favourable Indian reaction to his rule and unruffled by the attitude of the Anglo-Indian press. "I have no reason to complain," he wrote, "with anything that has been said of me in the papers. Those men whose opinions I value have been exceedingly kind."[3] He did not doubt that he had made

---

[1]Garth to N., 10 Apr. 1876, N.P., vol. 18.
[2]Report of Public Meeting, 8 Apr. 1876, loc. cit.
[3]N. to Grey, 11 Feb. 1876, N.P., Family collection.

mistakes, but was satisfied, as he confided to his uncle, that he had achieved his principal mission.

> On looking back upon the last four years I am happy to feel satisfied that whatever defects there may have been in the administration of affairs, the state of feeling in India is decidedly more satisfactory than it was at the beginning of the time, and the object I had in view from the first by steady government to attain has been realized far more completely than I deserve or could have anticipated.[1]

Northbrook's assessment of the situation was well justified for, while there were minor agrarian and communal disturbances during his term,[2] they had no political overtones and there was no renewal of difficulties with either the Kukas or the Wahabis. Moreover, the enthusiastic tributes paid to Northbrook by the Indian educated classes showed that the strong feelings of discontent which had prevailed during Mayo's rule had been largely removed. In fact, probably no other Governor-General of the second half of the century except Ripon won the confidence of the educated classes to as great a degree as Northbrook.

Nor can there be any doubt that the high tribute which they accorded to him was merited and that he deserved to be placed in the first rank of British Indian statesmen. It was true that Northbrook was not a brilliant ruler and

---

[1] N. to Grey, 16 May 1876, ibid.

[2] The former occurred in the Pabna district of Bengal in 1873 and in the Deccan in 1875 and were caused by tenant-landlord friction. In February 1874 there were Parsi-Muslim riots in Bombay city in which some property was destroyed.

was somewhat deficient in imagination though he generally showed sound qualities of judgement. Nor was he a great reformer or innovator. However, in view of the extremely unsettling effect of the many administrative and legislative changes and the enhancement of taxation which had taken place in recent years, there was no doubt that a period of consolidation was badly needed. By his cautious financial policy, his restraint in legislation, and his attitude towards education he did much to restore confidence among the general public and the educated classes in particular. Though he broke little new ground in these fields, he showed great boldness, originality, and a wholesome disregard for orthodox laissez-faire doctrines in his famine and tariff policies. Moreover, despite the criticism, much of his Baroda policy was marked by originality and an unprecedented liberality of spirit. But it was difficult to reconcile constitutional methods with the demands of autocratic government, and his chief fault lay in not pursuing his policy to its logical conclusion by giving Malhar Rao the benefit of the doubt. In foreign affairs, too, he did much to develop the buffer state policy and by avoiding frontier wars of expansion furthered the consolidating effect produced by his domestic policies. Finally, Northbrook showed great strength of character and a genuine concern for India's interests in resisting the deliberate

efforts of the Conservative Government to shape Indian financial and foreign policy to serve British interests. It was his opposition to this new phase of imperialism along with his greater sympathy for Indian aspirations which made real co-operation between him and Salisbury impossible. Though the object of both was to strengthen British influence in India, the methods by which Northbrook endeavoured to do this were certainly more acceptable to the educated classes. But even he was not prepared at that time, as shown by the restrictive nature of the rules devised for the admission of Indians into the civil service, to give them a greatly increased share in governing the country. However, he paid close attention to Indian public opinion and shaped much of his policy accordingly, while his enthusiastic promotion of education, his proposals for raising the age limits for the civil service examinations, and his refusal to restrict the freedom of the press suggest that he envisaged the gradual establishment of a somewhat more representative form of government. In the meantime he believed that India should be governed according to the liberal principles of the 1858 Proclamation and it was his consistent efforts to do this which marked out his term as one of the most benevolent episodes of British rule in India.

It is interesting to note that much as Northbrook desired to keep Indian questions out of British party

politics, the contrast between his policies and those of his Conservative successor, Lytton, led the educated classes to put their faith in the Liberals as the party most likely to satisfy their aspirations and do justice to India. Previously their sympathies had been predominantly with the Conservatives who had been responsible for the Proclamation of 1858 and had originated the scholarship scheme of 1868 to enable Indians to go to England to study for the civil service examinations[1] -- a scheme which was vetoed by a Liberal Ministry. Moreover, in view of the Cobdenite disinterest in colonies, there was some apprehension that the Liberals had little real concern for India's well-being. All this changed, however, when Lytton and the Conservatives, reversing Northbrook's policies, introduced control of the vernacular press, abolished the cotton tariff, enhanced direct taxation, and got involved in war with Afghanistan. Before Northbrook's retirement from office, some Indian newspapers were severely condemning Salisbury and the Conservatives and by 1879 most of them were anxiously looking forward to their defeat by the Liberals in the approaching elections.

One result of the unfolding of Conservative policies was that Northbrook's achievements became more and more appreciated by Indian public opinion. The ceremony

---

[1]Editorials, Hindoo Patriot, 16 Feb. 1874, and Bengalee, 17 Apr. 1880.

unveiling his statue in Calcutta in September 1879 was a great success and Indian newspapers took advantage of the occasion to eulogize Northbrook. The Bengalee, for example, declared:

> The statue was raised by a grateful country, in honor of one of its best and greatest rulers and in commemoration of a liberal and enlightened, just and humane, policy which scattered the blessings of peace and contentment among its teeming millions.
> [In contrast to the repressive and imperialistic policies of his successor, Northbrook governed India] for the Indian people, without fear or favour, and in obedience to the strictest principles of justice.
> ... Was it at all to be wondered then that when the ceremony of unveiling His Lordship's statue was over and the Europeans had left the scene, large numbers of natives came up to the statue and greeted it with reverend Salams.[1]

Northbrook's popularity was further enhanced by his strong criticism of Conservative policy in India both inside and outside Parliament as well as by his formation in 1879 of a society to serve the interests of Indians living in Britain.[2] It was not surprising therefore that when the Liberals won the election of 1880 many Indians looked forward to Northbrook's becoming either Viceroy or Secretary of State.[3] However, Northbrook was not asked to return to India though it was, in his own words, "a very near thing".[4] Although he would have preferred the India Office "to any other", he thought it was better to put "a fresh man" there

---

[1]Editorial, Bengalee, 27 Sept. 1879.
[2]Hobhouse co-operated with Northbrook in founding this association which became known as the Northbrook Society.
[3]Editorials, Bengalee, 1 May 1880, and Hindoo Patriot, 3 May 1880.
[4]N. to Aitchison, 22 May 1880, N.P., vol. 19.

and the position went to Hartington while Northbrook took charge of the Admiralty. There can be no doubt that Ripon in India and Northbrook at the India Office would have made an extremely capable team. However, he was the Cabinet's chief expert on Indian questions, had much influence on Ripon, and was probably a stronger and more consistent supporter of his administration than any other member of the Government. Although he never held office after 1885, Northbrook continued to show much interest in Indian affairs, rarely missed a debate on the subject in the House of Lords, and, as one Indian newspaper described it, "raised his voice of protest whenever any injustice was done towards India."[1] He was, in fact, in accord with the best traditions of the Liberal party -- as exemplified by men like Gladstone, Fawcett, John Bright, and Ripon -- in his real friendship for India and his desire to lead her gradually towards a form of greater self-government. It was this, coupled with his record as Governor-General, which led the Bengalee, at the time of his death, to refer to him as "a pro-Indian Viceroy"[2] -- a description with which the Indian educated classes largely agreed and was one accorded to few other British statesmen.

---

[1] Hindoo Patriot, 17 Nov. 1904.
[2] Editorial, 17 Nov. 1904.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Unpublished Sources

I. Private Papers.

A. Northbrook Papers.

1. Correspondence of Lord Northbrook relating to the Indian phase of his career. India Office Library (Eur. MSS. C.144).
   The papers consist of private and demi-official letters sent and received by Northbrook.

1-4. Correspondence with the Marquis of Ripon, 1881-84.

5. Correspondence with Lord Lansdowne, 1880-90, and Lord Dufferin, 1884-88.

6. Correspondence with Grant Duff and Colonel Biddulph, 1882-86.

7. General correspondence, 1876-79.

8. Letters to the Queen, 1872-76.

9. Correspondence with the Duke of Argyll, 1872-74.

10. Telegrams to and from the Duke of Argyll and the Marquis of Salisbury regarding the famine, 1873-74.

11-12. Correspondence with the Marquis of Salisbury, 1874-76.

13-19. Correspondence with persons in India, 1872-80.

20-23. Correspondence with persons in England, 1872-76.

2. Family Collection.
   Various letters and papers of Lord Northbrook in the possession of the family.

   Letters from Northbrook and his daughter, Emma, to Sir George Grey, 1872-76.

   Letters relating to the Prince of Wales' visit to India, 1875-76.

Memoranda and correspondence relating to Baroda.

General correspondence, 1880-1900, consisting largely of letters to Northbrook from people in England, but also containing copies of some of his own letters.

B. Other Private Papers.

1. Argyll Papers.
Correspondence of the 8th Duke of Argyll, Secretary of State for India, 1868-74. India Office Library (microfilm copies).

1-2. Private letters from the Earl of Mayo, with enclosures, 1869-72.

3. Letters from Sir John Strachey following the assassination of Lord Mayo, Feb.-May 1872.

4. Despatches to India, drafted or amended by Argyll, 1868-74.

6. Private correspondence and other papers from Lord Napier, 1866-72.

7. Letters and other papers from Sir Philip Wodehouse, 1872-74.

8. Letters and other papers from Sir George Campbell, 1869-74.

9. Letters and other papers from Lord Northbrook, 1872-75.

10. Letters and other papers from Sir Bartle Frere, 1868-73.

11. Letters and other papers from Sir William Muir, 1869-74.

12. Letters and other papers from Lord Halifax, 1869-73.

13. Letters and other papers from Sir Richard Temple, 1868-74.

27-32. Miscellaneous letters and papers, 1869-75.

36. Personal letters, mainly to his wife and other members of his family, 1850-90.

38. Indian Railways: gauge question; Government agency question, 1869-73.

42. Miscellaneous Army and Military affairs, pre-1873.

43. Lord Northbrook's Army Reformation Proposals, and other military affairs, 1873.

2. Cromer Papers.
Correspondence of Lord Cromer, the former Evelyn Baring, private secretary to Northbrook, 1872-76. Public Record Office (F.O. 633).

1. Letters, 1872-73, containing correspondence with various people in India, official and non-official.

2. Correspondence, 1877-80.

7. Letters to the Earl of Cromer, 1883-1905.

12. Literary and personal letters.

3. Disraeli Papers.
Correspondence of Benjamin Disraeli, 1st Earl of Beaconsfield. Hughenden Manor (National Trust), High Wycombe.
Papers relating to India are classified in section B., Political Papers, of which the following sub-sections were consulted:

XII. The Second Disraeli Administration.
D. Irish and Colonial Papers.
Nos. 49-55, The ex-Gaikwar of Baroda.
Nos. 56-61, The Prince of Wales' tour.

XVI. The Eastern Question.

XVIII. Foreign Affairs: Miscellaneous.
A. Russia; Russia in Asia; Russia in Balkans. Memoranda and other papers.

B. Afghanistan.
Correspondence and memoranda, 1872-81, and copies of official papers, 1876-80.

XX. Major Correspondents.

B/XX/Ly, 214-310. Correspondence with the Earl of Lytton, 1873-81.

B/XX/Bo, 1-121. Correspondence with Lord Mayo, 1850-72.

B/XX/Ce, 1-264. Correspondence with the Marquis of Salisbury, 1858-81.

B/XX/Ce, 320-74. Correspondence with Lady Salisbury, 1878-81.

4. Gladstone Papers.
Correspondence of William Ewart Gladstone. British Museum (Add. MSS.).

44102-04. Correspondence with Argyll, 1871-80.

44168. Correspondence with Granville, 1871-72.

44185-86. Correspondence with Halifax, 1870-85.

44266-67. Correspondence with Northbrook, 1868-85.

44541. Letter Books, 1871-72.

5. Lytton Papers.
Correspondence and papers of the 1st Earl of Lytton, Viceroy of India, 1876-80. India Office Library (Eur. MSS. E.218).

23/1-2. Native Civil Service, 1876-77.

516/1-2. Secretary of State's Letters, 1876-77.

517/1-6. Letters from England, 1876-78.

518/1-3. Letters despatched, 1876-78.

519/1-6. Correspondence in India, 1876-77.

6. Mayo Papers.
Correspondence and papers of the 6th Earl of Mayo, Viceroy of India, 1869-72. Cambridge University Library (Add. 7490).
The papers are classified according to subjects, of which the following were consulted:

Allahabad and Roorkee, panic at.
Correspondence on the panic among Europeans at these places in 1870 and memorandum by Mayo on the subject.

Central Asia.
Sect. I. Afghanistan and neighbouring states.
(a) Miscellaneous.
(b) Aid for Ameer Shere Ali.
(c) Frontier Policy.
(e) Ameer Shere Ali and Yakub Khan, reconciliation,
(f) Russian relations.
(h) Umballa Durbar.

Sect. II. Russia and Central Asia.
(a) Sir A. Buchanan correspondence.
(c) Trade.
(e) Military organization and expeditions.

Letters despatched, 1869-72.

Wahabees.
Sect. I. Assassination of Chief Justice Norman.

Sects. II-IV. Correspondence and official papers on the Wahabee movement.

7. Salisbury Papers.
Correspondence and papers of the 3rd Marquis of Salisbury. Christ Church Library, Oxford.

Sect. I. Special correspondence (manuscript).
Baring series: Letters and enclosures from Northbrook, 1874-80.

Hamilton series: Letters from Lord George Hamilton, 1871-1902.

Hobart series: Letters from Lady Hobart, 1875-78.

Maine series: Letters from Sir Henry Maine, 1867-85.

Mallet series: Letters from Sir Louis Mallet, 1874-77.

Wodehouse series: Letters from Sir Philip Wodehouse, 1874-76.

Sect. II. Special correspondence (typescript).
Beaconsfield collection: Copies of private letters between Salisbury and Disraeli, 1855-77.

Mallet series: Copies of letters to Sir Louis Mallet, 1874-80.

Sect. III. Letter Books.
1-2. Copies of letters to Northbrook and the Presidency Governors, 1874-77.

8. Temple Papers.
Correspondence and papers of Sir Richard Temple. India Office Library (Eur. MSS. F.86).

2. Letters to Northbrook, 1874-76 (copies).

11. Letters from Northbrook and Evelyn Baring, 1872-76.

12. Letters from Northbrook, 1874-79 (manuscript).

19. Letters from India, 1867-74, consisting mainly of letters to his father.

20. Letters from the Government of India, 1870-76.

23A. Miscellaneous letters received, 1870-77.

85. Letters from England regarding Indian finance, 1868-73.

90. Legislative Speeches, 1873-74.

92. Financial Statements, 1869-73.

93. Financial Minutes, 1869-73.

97. Income Tax Speeches, 1870-73.

98. Income Tax Papers, 1870-73.

101. Political Papers, 1870-73.

103. Military Papers, 1870-76.

104. Localization of Indian Finance, 1871-72.

105. Notes, Minutes Financial, 1871-73.

106. Letters and Notes Financial, 1871-73.

114. Indian Railways, 1869-73.

116. Indian Irrigation, 1870-73.

118. Asiatic Papers, 1873.

120-34. Bihar Famine, 1873-74.

135-72. Papers relating to Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal.

214. Native Opinion, Vernacular Press, India, 1867-77.

217. Newspaper Extracts.

218. Miscellaneous Pamphlets, 1870-76.

II. Official Records. India Office Library.

1. Agriculture, Revenue and Commerce Department Proceedings.

Vols. 695 and 939.	Customs and Salt, 1871-78.
Vols. 685, 686, and 929.	Famine, 1873-76.
Vols. 680-83.	Land Revenue and Settlements, 1872-75.

2. Bengal Education Proceedings.

Vol. 11.	1870.
Vols. 162-65.	1871-75.
Vol. 874.	1876-77.

3. Bengal Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 1876-80 and 1904.

4. Bombay Vernacular Newspaper Reports, Oct. 1876-80 and 1904.

5. Collections to Bombay Political Despatches.
Vols. 83-85. 1872.

6. Council of India: Minutes of Dissent.
Vol. 1. 1869-80.

7. Council of India: Minutes of Proceedings.
Vols. 28-37. 1872-76.

8. Enclosures to Financial Letters from India.
Vols. 96-97. 1873.

9. Financial Department Proceedings.
Vols. 729-36. 1872-75.

Vols. 962 and 964. 1876.

10. Financial Department Proceedings, Separate Revenue.
Vols. 666 and 667. 1872-75.

Vol. 966. 1876-77.

11. Financial Despatches to India. Original drafts.
Vols. 14-17. 1872-75.

12. Financial Letters from India.
Vols. 91, 95, 95A, 99, 100, and 104. 1872-75.

13. Foreign Department Proceedings, Political.
Vols. 763-76. 1872-75.

Vol. 1031. 1876.

14. Home Department Proceedings, Education.
Vol. 33. 1870.

Vols. 518-20. 1871-75.

Vol. 1000. 1876-78.

15. Home Department Proceedings, Public.
Vols. 510-17. 1872-75.

16. Judicial and Legislative Despatches to India.
Original drafts.
Vols. 15-19. 1872-76.

17. Legislative Department Proceedings.
Vols. 709-19. 1871-75.

Vols. 1016-19. 1876.

18. North-Western Provinces Vernacular Newspaper Reports, 1872-76.

19. Political Despatches to Bombay.
Vols. 13-14. 1872-74.

20. Political Letters from Bombay.
Vols. 4-10. 1871-74.

21. Political and Secret Despatches to India.
Vols. 14-17. 1871-74.

Vol. 1. 1875.

22. Political and Secret Letters from India.
Vols. 11-19. 1872-74.

Vols. 1-7. 1875-76.

23. Public Works Department Proceedings.
Vols. 559-63. 1872-75.

24. Public Despatches to India. Original drafts.
Vols. 15-19. 1872-76.

Published Sources

I. Parliamentary Papers relating to India.

Vol. and year	No.	Description
viii (1871)	363	Indian Finance: report and proceedings of select committee.
viii (1872)	327	Indian Finance: report and proceedings of select committee.
xliv (1872)	206	Finance and revenue accounts.
" "	21	Home accounts.
" "	289	Income-tax.
" "	C.643	Railways.
" "	161	Wahabis at Patna: minute by Dalhousie, 1852.

Vol. and year	No.	Description
xlv (1872)	356	Kuka outbreak: correspondence.
xii (1873)	354	Indian Finance: report and proceedings of select committee.
l (1873)	203	Finance and revenue accounts.
" "	204	Home accounts.
" "	86	Kalat: treaty of 1854.
" "	C.838	Railways.
lxxv (1873)	C.864	Ava and France: treaty concluded between them.
" "	C.699	Central Asia: correspondence with Russia respecting.
" "	C.704	Further correspondence.
ii (1874)	154	Act to amend the law relating to the Council of the Governor-General.
viii (1874)	329	Indian Finance: report and proceedings of select committee.
xlvii (1874)	169	Finance and revenue accounts.
" "	168	Home accounts.
" "	326	Finance: observations by Sir J. Strachey.
" "	305	Bombay riots: correspondence.
xlviii (1874)	217	Kashgar treaty of 1874.
xlix (1874)	214	Public works.
" "	C.1070	Railways.
l (1874)	C.954	Bengal famine: correspondence
	C.955	and papers.
liv (1875)	204	Finance and revenue accounts.
" "	205	Home accounts.
" "	357	Army.
" "	315	Civil Service appointments: rules for appointment of 'natives' of India.
" "	109	Customs duties.
" "	188	Income-tax: minutes of Viceroy and members of Council.
" "	C.1369	Railways.

Vol. and year	No.	Description
lvi (1875)	C.1203	Baroda: report of commission of 1873 with correspondence.
" "	C.1249	Baroda: correspondence on Gaikwar's marriage.
" "	C.1250	Baroda: papers on death of Bhao Sindia and Govind Naik.
" "	C.1251	Baroda: correspondence relating to administrative reform.
" "	C.1252	Baroda: correspondence on deposition of Malhar Rao.
" "	C.1271	Baroda: correspondence on the appointment of commission of 1875.
" "	C.1272	Baroda: proceedings of the commission of 1875.
lv (1876)	226	Finance and revenue accounts.
" "	227	Home accounts.
" "	C.1446	Indian Civil Service: papers relating to selection and training of candidates.
lvi (1876)	102	Legislation: copies of certain Legislative Despatches.
" "	C.1584	Railways.
" "	56	Tariff Act of 1875: correspondence.
" "	C.1515	Further correspondence.
" "	70	Dissent of members of Council on despatch of 11 Nov. 1875, relating to Tariff Act.
" "	216	Telegram, 30 Sept. 1875 from Secretary of State on Tariff Act and opinions of members of Council thereon.
" "	219	Financial despatch, 15 July 1875 on Indian tariff.
" "	333	Opinions of members of Council on despatches of 31 May 1876 on Tariff Act.
lxii (1877)	209	Finance and revenue accounts.
" "	210	Home accounts.
" "	C.1698	Organization of Native Army.
lxiii (1877)	C.1823	Railways.
lxiv (1877)	C.1807	Kalat: papers relating to, 1870-75.

Vol. and year	No.	Description
lxiv (1877)	C.1808	Kalat: papers relating to treaty with the Khan, 8 Dec. 1876.
xii (1878)	333	Public works: report and proceedings of select committee.
lviii (1878)	C.2071	Deccan riots: report of commissioners appointed in India to inquire into riots of May 1875.
lx (1878-79)	312	Public works: report and proceedings of select committee.
lv (1878-79)	240	Minute of members of Governor-General's Council, 30 Mar. 1876, on despatch of 11 Nov. 1875.
lvi (1878-79)	C.2190	Afghanistan: correspondence on relations between the British Government and that of Afghanistan, 1863-78.

II. Newspapers and Periodicals.

A. Indian.

1. The Bengalee, 1876-80 and 1904.
2. The Hindoo Patriot, 1874-80 and 1904.

B. Anglo-Indian.

1. The Bombay Gazette, 1874-76.
2. The Englishman, 1872-76.
3. The Friend of India, 1872-76.
4. The Indian Daily News, 1875-76.
5. The Indian Economist, 1873-75.
6. The Pioneer, 1872-76.
7. The Times of India, 1872-76.

C. British.

1. The Daily News, 1872-76.
2. The Economist, 1875-76.
3. The Morning Advertiser, 1872.
4. The Pall Mall Gazette, 1872-76.
5. The Spectator, 1872-76.
6. The Standard, 1875-76.
7. The Times, 1872-78, 1897, and 1904.

III. Other Works.

Adye, General Sir John. Indian Frontier Policy. An Historical Sketch. London, 1897.

Aitchison, C.U. A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads relating to India and Neighbouring Countries. Revised edition. Calcutta, 1931-33.

Alder, G.J. British India's Northern Frontier, 1865-95. A Study in Imperial Policy. London, 1963.

Anstey, Vera. The Economic Development of India. London, 1929.

Argyll, Duchess of (ed.). George Douglas, Eighth Duke of Argyll, 1823-1900. Autobiography and Memoirs. 2 vols. London, 1906.

Argyll, 8th Duke of. The Afghan Question from 1841 to 1878. London, [1879].

Bagal, J.C. History of the Indian Association, 1876-1951. Calcutta, [1953].

Balfour, Lady Betty. The History of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration, 1876-1880. London, 1899.

____ (ed.). Personal and Literary Letters of Robert, First Earl of Lytton. 2 vols. London, 1906.

Banerjea, P.N. A History of Indian Taxation. London, 1930.

Banerjea, Sir Surendranath. A Nation in Making, Being the Reminscences of Fifty Years of Public Life. London, 1925.

Barnes, Margarita. The Indian Press. A History of the Growth of Public Opinion in India. London, 1940.

Bengal and Orissa Famine Reports, 1867. Calcutta, 1867.

A Bengal Civilian. The Black Pamphlet of Calcutta. The Famine of 1874. London, 1876.

Beveridge, Lord. India Called Them. London, 1947.

Bhatia, B.H. Famines in India. A Study in Some Aspects of the Economic History of India, 1860-1945. London, 1963.

Bhattacharya, S. "Trevelyan, Wilson, Canning and the foundations of Indian Financial Policy", Bengal Past and Present, vol. lxxx (1961), pp. 65-73.

Biddulph, C.E. Our Western Frontier of India. London, 1887.

Blunt, Sir Edward. The I.C.S. London, 1937.

Blunt, W.S. India under Ripon. A Private Diary. London, 1909.

Bose, C.N. Thoughts on the Economical Condition of Bengal, its Present and Probable Future. Calcutta, 1869.

Bose, N.S. The Indian Awakening and Bengal. Calcutta, 1960.

Boulger, D.C. England and Russia in Central Asia. 2 vols. London, 1879.

Central Asian Questions. London, 1885.

British Policy Respecting Famines in India, Bombay, 1874.

Bruce, R.I. The Forward Policy and its Results, or Thirty-Five Years' Work amongst the Tribes on our North-Western Frontier of India. London, 1900.

Buckland, C.E. Bengal Under the Lieutenant-Governors, being a Narrative of the Principal Events and Public Measures during their Periods of Office, from 1854 to 1898. 2 vols. Calcutta, 1901.

Dictionary of Indian Biography. London, 1906.

Burne, O.T. Memories. London, 1907.

Cambridge History of India. vol. VI. Revised edition. Delhi, 1958.

Campbell, Sir George. Memoirs of my Indian Career. 2 vols. London, 1893.

Cecil, Lady Gwendolen. Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury. 4 vols. London, 1921-32.

Chesney, George. Indian Polity. A View of the System of Administration in India. London, 1868

Cotton, Sir Henry. Indian and Home Memories. London, 1911.

Cowling, Maurice. "Lytton, the Cabinet, and the Russians, August to November 1878," The English Historical Review, vol. lxxvi (1961), pp. 59-79.

Cromer, Earl of. Ancient and Modern Imperialism. London, 1910

Cumpston, Mary. "Some Early Indian Nationalists and their Allies in the British Parliament, 1851-1906," The English Historical Review, vol. lxxvi (1961), pp. 279-97.

Curzon, Marquis of. British Government in India. The Story of the Viceroys and Government House. 2 vols. London, 1925.

Dacosta, John. Facts and Fallacies regarding Irrigation as a Prevention of Famine in India. London, 1878.

____ A Scientific Frontier; or the Danger of a Russian Invasion of India. London, 1891.

Davies, C.C. The Problem of the North-West Frontier 1890-1908 with a survey since 1849. Cambridge, 1932.

Dey, H.L. The Indian Tariff Problem in Relation to Industry and Taxation. London, 1933.

Digby, William. British Rule in India. Has it been, is it still, a Good Rule for the Indian People? London, 1891.

____ India for the Indians -- and for England. London, 1885.

Durand, H.M. Life of Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall. Edinburgh, 1913.

Dutt, Romesh. The Economic History of India in the Victorian Age. 4th edition. London, 1903.

Fawcett, Henry. Indian Finance. London, 1880.

____ Speech on Indian Finance. London, 1872.

Forjett, C. Our Real Danger in India. London, 1877.

Forsyth, Sir Douglas. Autobiography and Reminiscences. London, 1887.

Fortnight in the Famine Country of Bengal, March 1874. / Serampore /, 1874.

Fraser-Tytler, W.K. Afghanistan. A Study of Political Developments in Central Asia. London, 1950.

Frechtling, L.E. "Anglo-Russian Rivalry in Eastern Turkistan, 1863-1881," Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, vol. xxvi (1939), pp. 471-89.

Frere, Sir Bartle. Afghanistan and South Africa. London, 1881.

____ The Means of Ascertaining Public Opinion in India. London, 1871.

Furrell, James W. "Indian Famines and the Duty of Government in Connection with Them," The Calcutta Review, vol. lviii (1874), pp. 144-70 and 303-12.

Fytche, Lieut.-General Albert. Burma Past and Present with Personal Reminiscences of the Country. 2 vols. London, 1878.

Gadgil, D.R. The Industrial Evolution of India. Calcutta, 1924.

Garth, Sir Richard. A Few Plain Truths about India. London, 1888.

Ghose, D.K. England and Afghanistan. A Phase in their Relations. Calcutta, 1960.

Ghose, N.N. The Effect of Observations of England upon Indian Ideas and Institutions. Calcutta, 1877.

Gopal, S. The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon, 1880-1884. London, 1953.

Grant Duff, M.E. The Afghan Policy of the Beaconsfield Government and its Results. / London, 1880 /.

____ Notes from a Diary, 1851-1872. 2 vols. London, 1897.

____ Notes from a Diary, 1873-1881. 2 vols. London, 1898.

Griffiths, P.T. The British in India. London, 1946.

Gujral, Lalit. "The Internal Administration of Lord Lytton, with special reference to Social and Economic Policy, 1876-1880." Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1958.

____ "Sir Louis Mallet's Mission to Lord Northbrook on the Question of the Cotton Duties," Journal of Indian History, vol. xxxix (1961), pp. 473-87.

Hambly, G.R.G. "Lord Lytton and the Indian Civil Service," Bengal Past and Present, vol. lxxix (1960), pp. 1-17.

____ "Sir Richard Temple and the Government of India, 1868 to 1880. Some Trends in Indian Administrative Policy." Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University, 1961.

____ "Unrest in Northern India during the Viceroyalty of Lord Mayo, 1869-72; the Background to Lord Northbrook's Policy of Inactivity," Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, vol. xlvii (1961), pp. 37-55.

Hansard. Hansard's Parliamentary Debates. 3rd series.

Hobart, Lord. Essays and Miscellaneous Writings. 2 vols. London, 1885.

Hobhouse, L.T. and J.L.Hammond. Lord Hobhouse. A Memoir. London, 1905.

Hobhouse, Mary. Letters from India, 1872-1877. Printed for private circulation, 1906.

Hunter, W.W. England's Work in India. [London], 1881.

____ The Indian Musalmans: Are They Bound in Conscience to Rebel against the Queen? London, 1871.

____ A Life of the Earl of Mayo, Fourth Viceroy of India. 2 vols. London, 1876.

____ The Uncertainties of Indian Finance. Calcutta, 1869.

Ilbert, Sir Courtenay. The Government of India. A Brief Historical Survey of Parliamentary Legislation Relating to India. Oxford, 1922.

Imperial Gazetteer of India. New edition. Oxford, 1907-09.

Indian Famine Commission Report. 2 vols. London, 1880 and 1885.

Indian Education Commission Report. Calcutta, 1884.

"Income-Tax in India," The Calcutta Review, vol. liv (1872), pp. 92-117.

Ingram, T.D. Two Letters on some recent Proceedings of the Indian Government. London, 1871.

Keith, A.B. A Constitutional History of India, 1600-1935. London, 1936.

Kennedy, A.L. Salisbury, 1830-1903. Portrait of a Statesman. London, 1953.

Khan, Muin-ud-Din Ahmad. Selections from Bengal Government Records on Wahabi Trials, 1863-70. Dacca, 1961

Khan, Sir Syed Ahmed. The Present State of Indian Politics. Allahabad, 1888.

Khatoon, Mrs. Latifa. "Some Aspects of the Social History of Bengal, with special reference to the Muslims." Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of London, 1956.

Lambrick, H.T. John Jacob of Jacobabad. London, 1960.

Lee-Warner, W. Memoirs of Field-Marshal Sir Henry Norman. London, 1908.

"Legislative Council," The Calcutta Review, vol. lv (1872), pp. 119-41.

Loveday, A. The History and Economics of Indian Famines. London, 1914.

Lyall, Sir Alfred. The Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava. 2 vols. London, 1905.

MacDonnell, A.P. Report on the Food-Grain Supply and Statistical Review of the Relief Operations in the Distressed Districts of Behar and Bengal during the Famine of 1873-74. Calcutta, 1876.

Maclagan, M. Clemency Canning. London, 1962.

Mallet, Bernard. Sir Louis Mallet. A Record of Public Service and Political Ideals. London, 1905.

____ Thomas George, Earl of Northbrook. London, 1908.

Marriot, Sir J.A.R. The English in India. A Problem of Politics. Oxford, 1932.

Martineau, John. The Life and Correspondence of Sir Bartle Frere. 2 vols. London, 1895.

Masani, R.P. Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India. London, 1939.

Mehta, S.D. The Cotton Mills of India, 1854 to 1954. Bombay, 1954

Monypenny, W.F. and G.E. Buckle. The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield. 6 vols. London, 1910-20.

Morley, John. The Life of William Ewart Gladstone. 3 vols. London, 1903.

Mukerji, Chandra [?]. "The Baroda Coup d' Etat," and "The Judicial Play," Mookerjee's Magazine, Mar.-May 1875, pp. 79-247.

Mullick, G.B. Lord Northbrook and his Mission in India. Calcutta, 1873.

Natarajan, J. History of Indian Journalism. Part II of the Report of the Press Commission. Delhi, 1955.

Natarajan, S. A History of the Press in India. Bombay, 1962.

Naoroji, Dadabhai. Baroda Administration in 1874. A Statement in Reply to Remarks in the Baroda Blue Book of 1875. London, 1875.

____ Condition of India. Correspondence with the Secretary of State for India. Bombay, 1881.

____ Poverty and Un-British Rule in India. London, 1901.

Northbrook, Earl of. The Afghan Question. Speech in the Guildhall, Winchester, 11 Nov. 1878. London, [1878].

____ A Brief Account of Recent Transactions in Afghanistan. Printed for private circulation. [London], 1880.

____ Indian Criminal Procedure Bill. Speech in the Colston Hall, Bristol, 13 Nov. 1883. London, [1883].

____ Memorandum on Viscount Cranbrook's Despatch to Lord Lytton of 18th November 1878. London, [1878].

____ North-Western Frontier of India. Speech in the House of Lords on Monday, March 7, 1898 on the Motion of Lord Roberts of Candahar. London, 1898.

____ Speech in the House of Lords, 5th August 1878, on Presenting a Petition from the Inhabitants of Calcutta. London, /1878_/.

Northbrook's Government of India, 1872-76. Reprinted from The Times of India. Bombay, 1876.

O'Malley, L.S.S. The Indian Civil Service, 1601-1930. London, 1931.

Oxford History of India. 3rd edition. Oxford, 1958.

Pal, Dharm. Administration of Sir John Lawrence, 1864-1869. Simla, 1952.

Pal, N.M. The Industrial Evolution of India. Calcutta, 1930.

Palit, R.C. Speeches of Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea, 1876-80. Calcutta, 1880.

Philips, C.H. and others. The Evolution of India and Pakistan, 1858 to 1957. Select Documents. London, 1962.

Pillai, G.P. Representative Indians. 2nd edition. London, 1902.

Prasad, Bisheswar. The Foundations of India's Foreign Policy, 1860-1882. Calcutta, 1955.

Rao, Raja Dinker. Memorandum of Observations on the Administration of India. Agra, 1876.

Rawlinson, Major-General Sir Henry. England and Russia in the East. London, 1875.

Redford, Arthur. Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade. vol. 2. 1850-1939. Manchester, 1956.

Roberts, Lord. Forty-One Years in India. 2 vols. London, 1897.

Routledge, James. English Rule and Native Opinion in India. London, 1878.

Roy, N.C. The Civil Service in India. Calcutta, 1960.

Sergeant, Philip W. The Ruler of Baroda. An Account of the Life and Work of the Maharaja Gaekwar. London, 1928.

Singh, Hira Lal. Problems and Policies of the British in India. London, 1963.

Singh, S.N. The Secretary of State for India and his Council. Delhi, 1962.

Singhal, D.P. India and Afghanistan, 1876-1907. A Study in Diplomatic Relations. Melbourne, 1963.

Smith, R.B. Life of Lord Lawrence, 2 vols. London, 1883.

Stokes, Eric. The English Utilitarians and India. Oxford, 1959.

Strachey, John. The Administration of the Earl of Mayo as Viceroy and Governor General of India. Calcutta, 1872.

____ India. Its Administration and Progress. 3rd edition. London, 1903.

____ and Lieutenant-General Richard Strachey. The Finances and Public Works of India from 1869 to 1881. London, 1882.

Taleyarkhan, D.A. The Riots of 1874: Their True History and Philosophy. Bombay, 1874.

Tayler, William. Famines in India: Their Remedy and Prevention. London, 1874.

Temple, Sir Richard. India in 1880. London, 1880.

____ Men and Events of my Time in India. London, 1882.

Terentyef, M.A. Russia and England in Central Asia. 2 vols. Calcutta, 1876.

Thacker's Bengal Directory, 1872-76.

Thomas, P.J. The Growth of Federal Finance in India. Madras, 1939.

Thompson, Edward and G.T. Garratt. Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India. London, 1934.

Thornton, T.H. Colonel Sir Robert Sandeman. His Life and Work on our Indian Frontier. London, 1895.

____ General Sir Richard Meade and the Feudatory States of Central and Southern India. London, 1898.

Tinker, Hugh. The Foundations of Local Self-Government in India, Pakistan and Burma. London, 1954.

Trial and Deposition of Mulhar Rao, Gaekwar of Baroda. Bombay, 1875.

Tucker, H.P. St. George. Baroda Complications and Press Etiquette with a few words in Defence of Colonel Phayre and the Bombay Government. London, 1875.

Vakil, C.N. and others. Growth of Trade and Industry in Modern India. Calcutta, 1931.

Vakil, K.S. Education in India. Lucknow, 1948.

Wacha, D.E. A Financial Chapter in the History of Bombay City. Bombay, 1910.

Wallace, R. The Guicowar and his Relations with the British Government. Bombay, 1863.

Wedderburn, Sir William. Allan Octavian Hume, Father of the Indian National Congress. London, 1913.

Wolf, Lucien. The Life of the First Marquess of Ripon. 2 vols. London, 1921.

Wyllie, J.W.S. Essays on the External Policy of India. London, 1875.

Zetland, Marquis of (ed.). The Letters of Disraeli to Lady Bradford and Lady Chesterfield. 2 vols. London, 1929.

Zoberi, Z.H. "The Relations between the Home and Indian Governments, 1858-1870." Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of London, 1950.

THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT 1875

Scale 265 miles = to 1 inch

RUSSIA
Merv
Oxus R.
Khoja Saleh
YARKAND
Wood's Lake
BADAKHSHAN
WAKHAN
MAIMENA
HINDU KUSH MTS.
Herat
Karakoram Pass
Kabul
Khyber Pass
Peshawar
AFGHANISTAN
KASHMIR
Kandahar
SEISTAN
PUNJAB
Lahore
Simla
TIBET
Quetta
Bolan Pass
Dera Ghazi Khan
Multan
Ludhiana
Malaudkee
Kotla
Ambala
Jacobabad
Indus R.
BAHAWALPUR
NORTH
Meerut
Delhi
HIMALAYAS
CHINA
RAJPUTANA
Agra
WEST OUDH
SIND
Kotri
Jaipur
Lucknow
NEPAL
Brahmaputra R.
Karachi
Gwalior
PROVINCES
Allahabad
Ganges R.
Patna
ASSAM
Sylhet
Momien
YUNNAN
ARABIAN SEA
Palanpur
CENTRAL INDIA AGENCY
BENGAL
Pabna
Bhamo
Indore
Baroda
Narbudda R.
Calcutta
Mandalay
SHAN STATES
Tapti R.
Surat
CENTRAL PROVINCES
Mahanadi R.
BURMA
BERAR
Irrawaddy R.
KARENNI
Bombay
Poona
HYDERABAD
BRITISH BURMA
BOMBAY
Godavari R.
Hyderabad
Rangoon
BAY OF BENGAL
Goa
MYSORE
Bangalore
Madras
Andaman Islands
Beypur
CEYLON

References
British territory
Princely States
Railways opened

THE BENGAL PRESIDENCY

showing the area of the 1873-74 Famine

Intense Severe Slight

Scale 50 miles = to 1 inch

NORTH WESTERN PROVINCES

CENTRAL PROVINCES

ASSAM

BAY OF BENGAL

Darjeeling

Brahmaputra R.

Gandak R.

Muzaffurpur

TIRHUT

Madhubani

Darbhanga

Bahera

Bagmati R.

Purnea

Rangpur

Dinajpur

Bagra R.

Chapra

Patna

Ganges R.

Monghyr

Bhagalpur

Son Canals

Gaya

Son R.

Ganges R.

Rajshahi

Murshidabad

Berhampur

Pabna

Dacca

Ranchi

Bankura

Bardwan

Krishnagar

Howrah

Calcutta

Midnapur